CARTOONIST PROfiles

Above is a self-caricature done by Al Capp while he was being interviewed recently for our magazine by Richard Marschall, following Capp's retiring of Li'l Abner after 43 years. The conversation begins on Page 10 of this issue.

No. 37, March 1978 $3

COMICS, ANYONE?

Regards from the gang at U.F.S.

COMICS

BOOMER by Brown & Casson (dS)
THE DROPOUTS by Howard Post (dS)
EB & FLO by Paul Sellers (dS)
DOCTOR SMOCK by George Lemont (dS)
FERD'NAND by Dahl Mikkelsen (dS)
GORDO by Gus Arriola (dS)
GUMDROP by George Crenshaw (d)
MARMADUKE by Brad Anderson (dS)
NANCY by Ernie Bushmiller (dS)
NORBERT by George Fett (d)
PEANUTS by Charles M. Schulz (dS)
TARZAN by Edgar Rice Burroughs (dS)
TUMBLEWEEDS by T.K. Ryan (dS)
WEE PALS by Morris Turner (dS)
EMMY LOU by Marty Links (dS)
JEFF HAWKE by Sydney Jordan (dS)
HEALTH CAPSULES by M. Petti, M.D. & Jud Hurd (d)
PIXIES by Jack Wohl (d)
THERE OUGHTA BE A LAW by Whipple & Borth (dS)
TV STARSCREEN by Al Kilgore (S)
THE BOSLEYS by John Stees (S)
WOODY"S WORLD by Bill Potter (d)
CAPTAIN & THE KIDS by John Dirks (S)
FUNLAND by Art Nugent (S)
THE GOOD OLD DAYS-ANTIQUES FAIR by Erwin L. Hess (S)
AUTO ALBUM by Tad Burness (S)

EDITORIAL CARTOONS

GENE BASSET (5tw)
MIKE PETTERS (4tw)
ANOTHER VIEW by Stees (6tw)
ART POINIER (6tw)
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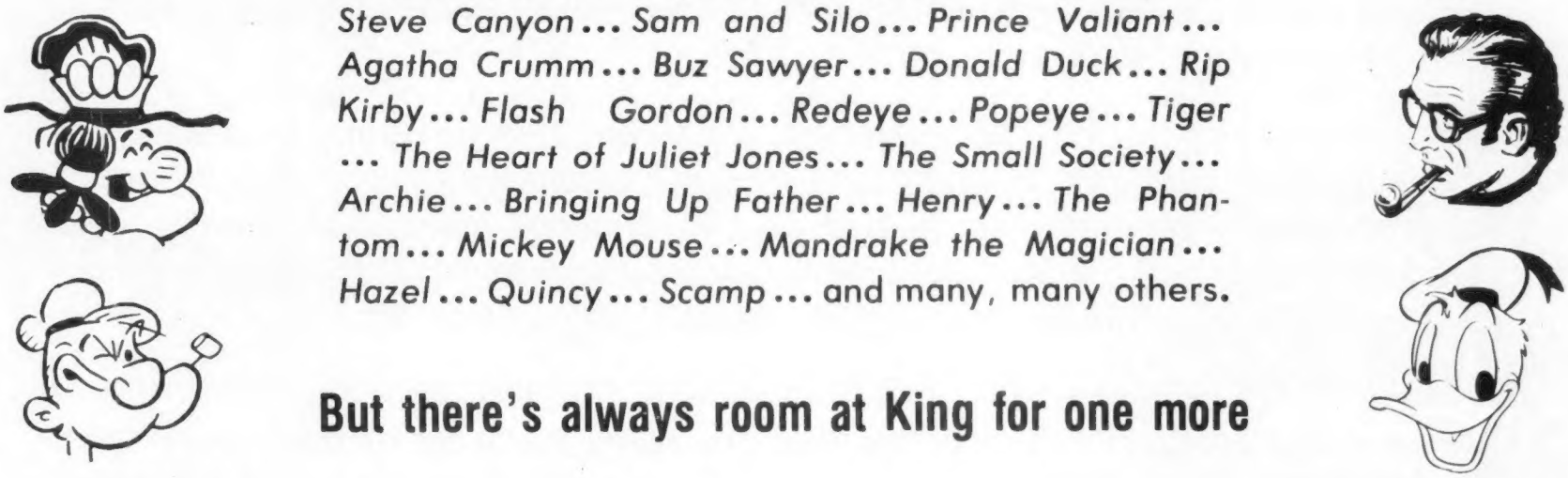

King Features Syndicate

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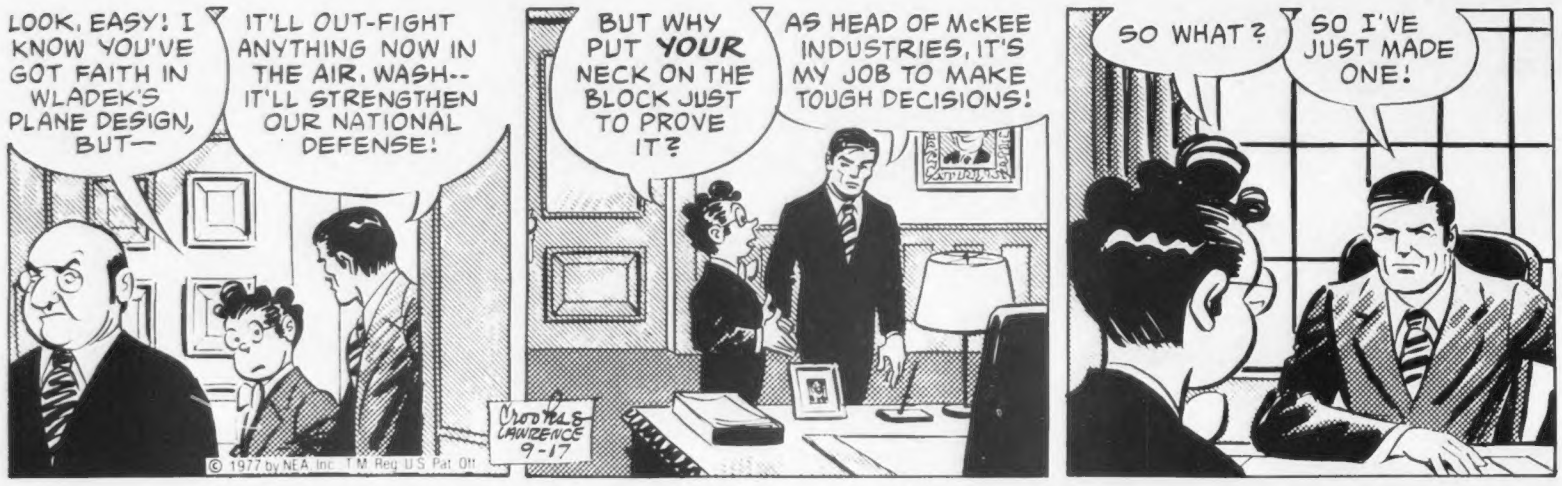
IT LOOKS EASY

and we believe it always has!


LOOK, EASY! I KNOW YOU'VE GOT FAITH IN WLADEK'S PLANE DESIGN, BUT—
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CROOKS LAWRENCE 9-17
BUT WHY PUT YOUR NECK ON THE BLOCK JUST TO PROVE IT?
AS HEAD OF McKEE INDUSTRIES, IT'S MY JOB TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS!
SO WHAT?
SO I'VE JUST MADE ONE!

Roy Crane created WASHINGTON TUBBS over 53 years ago. This was later shortened to WASH TUBBS and then, later still, retitled CAPTAIN EASY, when Easy became the more dominant character. Roy Crane is recognized as one of the early masters of the comic strip and the first to bring continuity stories into the funnies.

His assistant, Les Turner, took over the strip in 1943 and made it look EASY. Les will say it wasn't, because he spent many hours detailing his fascinating plots of humor and intrigue.

When Les retired in 1970, his assistant, Bill Crooks, in turn took over the strip and teamed up with writer Jim Lawrence. Bill made it look EASY when he captured the fine, expressive art of Roy Crane. Jim has worked the storyline to bring CAPTAIN EASY into the present day by making this socko adventurer the head of McKee Industries.

It looks EASY because a lot of hard work and imagination goes into it. If you have a comic strip, panel or script that you have put a lot of hard work into, send it to me, Flash Fairfield, Director of Comic Art, It won't be EASY, but it might be just what we're looking for.

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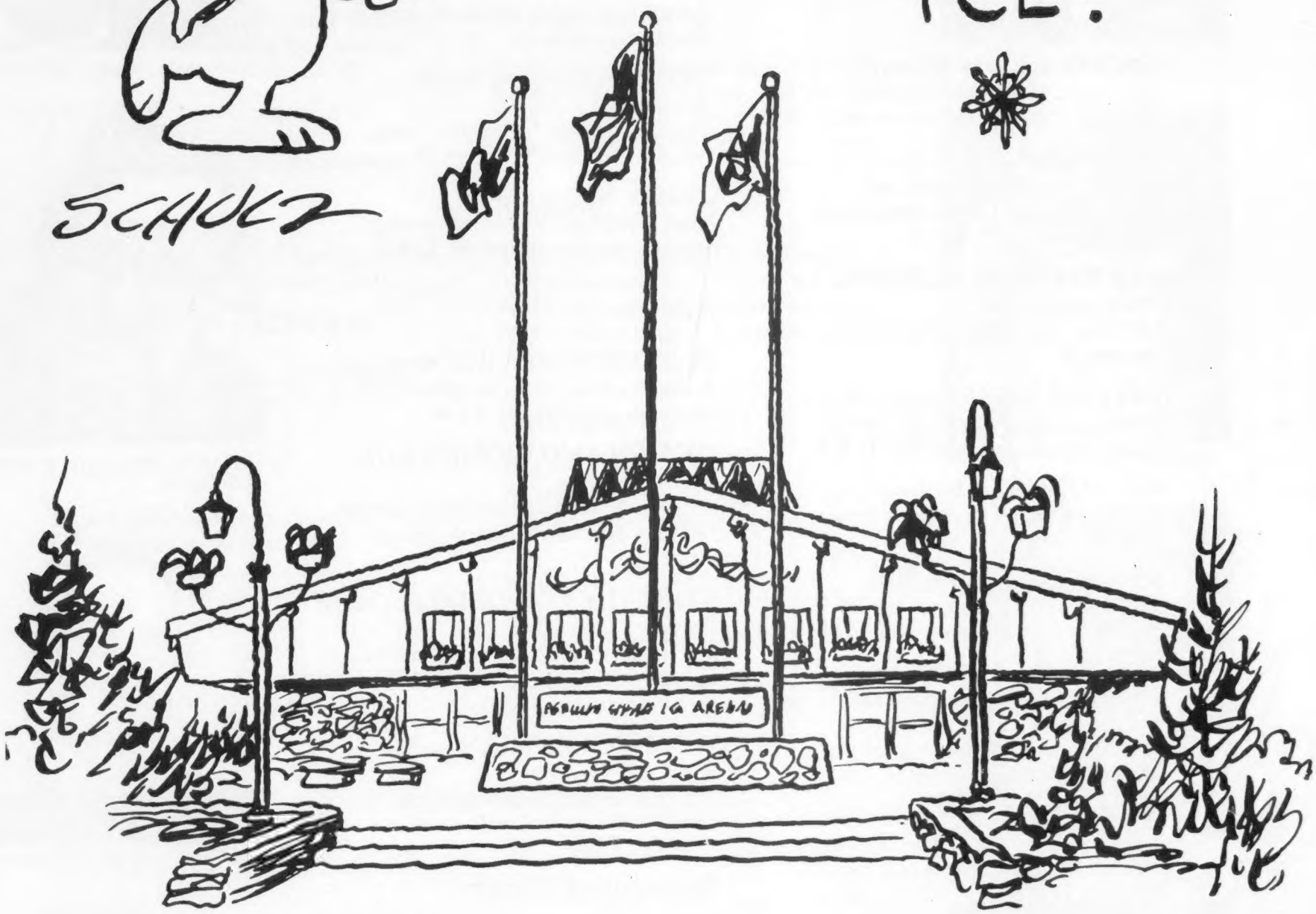

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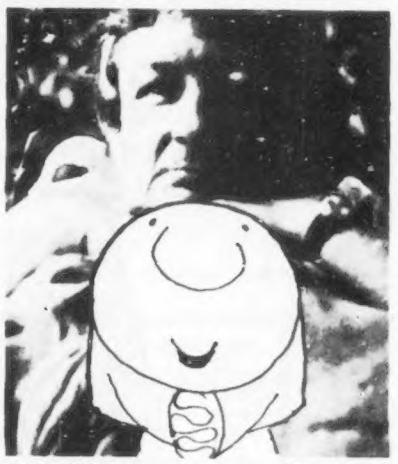

Tom Wilson, creator of *Ziggy*

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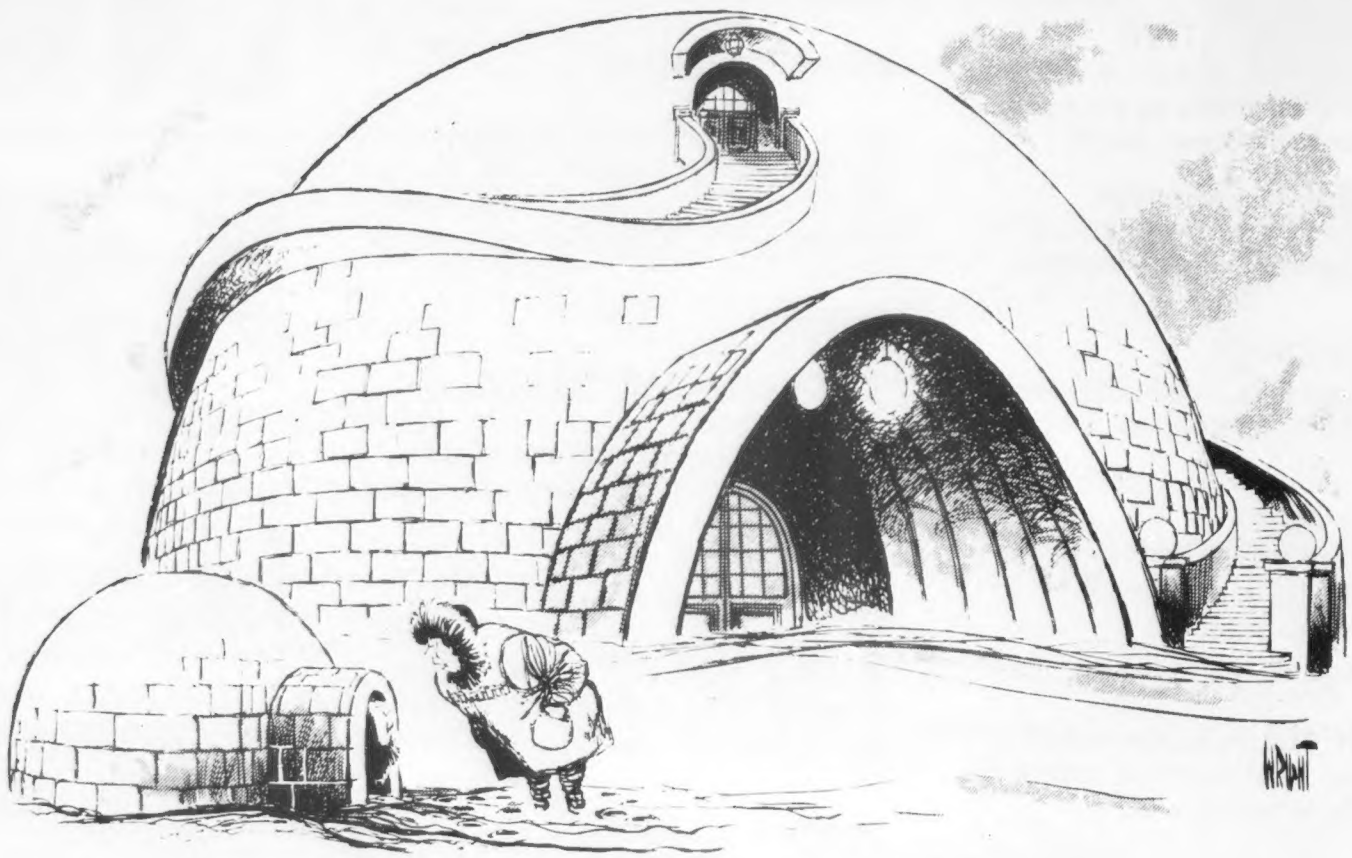

"I STILL THINK NANOOK SOLD OUT TO THE OIL COMPANIES."

EDITORIAL CARTOONIST **Don Wright**'S PEN DOESN'T JUST GET UNDER THE SKIN OF HIS SUBJECTS, IT **PENETRATES TO THE QUICK.**

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CARTOONIST PROfiles

March 1978 No. 37

Editor: JUD HURD

Photos by Jim Ruth

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Otto Messmer.....21
Bill Holman.....26
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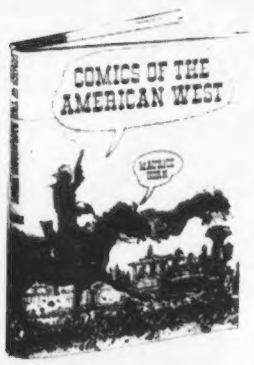
GOOD NEWS!!

One of our New Year's resolutions this past January 1 was to make every effort in 1978 to have each issue of CARTOONIST PROfiles in the hands of our subscribers by the 1st of whatever month appears on the cover of the magazine. (March issue to be received by March 1,etc.). We're confident that this will please you since all of us like to look forward to the arrival of a favorite magazine on a specific date.

The Lone Ranger rides again in the first and only fully illustrated history of Western Comic Strips and Comic Books ever published.

COMICS OF THE AMERICAN WEST

by MAURICE HORN



Through these pages gallop and stumble the heroes and buffoons of Western comics – from **Little Jimmy** through **The Lone Ranger** and **Red Ryder** to the present-day Western satires. And not only the Americans are represented. The popularity of Western comics extends to Europe, Latin America and Japan, and all the world's Western heroes and adopted cowboys are included. **Comics of the American West** is both a history and a thorough examination of the contributions made by comic strips and comic books to the mythology of the West. Its lively text chronicles the history and development of Western comics, American and worldwide. This is must reading for all nostalgia nuts, comic fans, and Western buffs, and a real pleasure trove for those whose vivid impressions of stagecoach robberies, Indian raids, damsels in distress, the U.S. Cavalry, and the opening of the frontier were formed from the characters and scenes in these pages. Illustrated in color and black-and-white. **$15.00**

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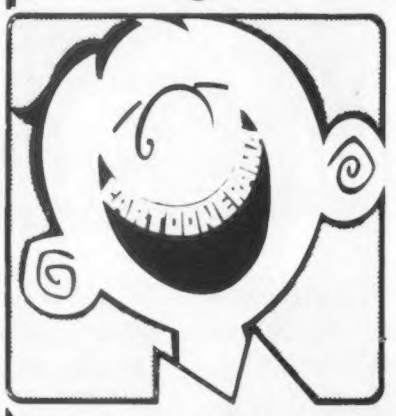

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The Truth About AL CAPP!! by

YO' BIN TELLIN' TH' PUBLIC HOOMILIATIN' AN' EMBARRASSIN' (THOUGH-GULP!!-TRUE) STORIES 'BOUT ME, MISTAH CAPP!!—NOW, AH IS GONNA TELL TH' BITTER TRUTH 'BOUT YO'!!—
AT 18, YO' WENT T' TH' ACADEMY O' FINE ARTS IN PHILY-DELPHIA—AT 19, TO TH' MOOSEUM SCHOOL, IN BOSTON. BUT YO' COULDN'T GIT THEM CRITTERS OUTA YORE MIND!!
AT 20, YO' GOT YORE FIRST CARTOONIN' JOB, FO' TH' ASSOCIATED PRESS. WITHIN A MONTH, FAME AN' FORT-CHUN HAD COME AN' GONE—
THEM LIES YO' TOLE 'BOUT US GOT A BIG LAFF OUTA A FEW WISE GUYS, NAMELY 50 MILLION FOLKS WHUT DON'T LIVE IN DOGPATCH—
LIL ABNER
THEM'S TH' SHAMEFUL FACKS O' YORE LIFE!!—BUT, YO' DONE A FEW NICE THINGS. YO' TALKED CATHRUN CAMERON INTO MARRYIN' YO'.
Al Capp

Shortly after AL CAPP announced his recent retirement, our occasional correspondent, RICHARD MARSCHALL, went up to Boston to interview LI'L ABNER's creator for our magazine. Herewith are the results of that conversation. Marschall, who was formerly Comics Editor of the Field Newspaper Syndicate, is now President of Cartoonist Representatives, Inc., which offers creative and marketing services to cartoonists. For the benefit of any of our readers who are interested, Marschall can be reached at 20 Bellevue Avenue in Rumson, New Jersey 07760. His phone there is (201) 842-2835.

This will not be a professional obituary of Al Capp, nor a lament of the passing of a great strip, but rather an attempt to examine the works and genius of this man and perhaps understand why for 43 years the world and America laughed as hard as it did because of him.

Capp has an immediacy. He is a character who transcends his paper creations. Even a simple conversation becomes a monolog with the second party a willing audience. My own meetings with Capp date back to associations in

LI'L ABNER
AN' AH IS PERSONALLY GONNA DRAW TH' PITCHERS!! — YO' WAS BORN IN NEW HAVEN, CONN., IN 1909 —
WHEN YO' WAS 15½ Y'ARS OLE, YO' HITCHHIKED THROUGH TH' SOUTH, AN' MET A MESS O' ONBELIEVUBBLE CRITTERS—
FO' TH' NEXT COUPLE O' Y'ARS, YO' LIVED TH' MAD, GAY LIFE O' A YOUNG ARTIST IN GREENWICH VILLAGE—
BUT YO' COULDN'T FO'GIT
I CAN'T SLEEP!!—THOSE HILLBILLIES HAUNT ME!!— I MIGHT AS WELL PUT 'EM DOWN ON PAPER.
-AN' AS A RESULT, ALONG COME
JULIE!!
CATHIE!!
KIM!!
THEN, JULIE MARRIED GEORGE— AN' AS A RESULT, ALONG COME—
TAMMY
KATIE
THEN CATHIE MARRIED -MICHAEL, AN'---
HAW!!—
IF YO' WANTS T' KNOW WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS THRILLIN', TRUE-LIFE, ADVENTURE STORY—
KEEP A-READIN' THIS PAPER!!
Reg. U. S. Pat Off.—All rights reserved
1957 by United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

Young Americans for Freedom, a conservative youth group, and through contacts when I was his editor at the syndicate. But our longest visit was on the afternoon of October 16, 1977, just after the formal announcement of his strip's demise.

Many of his recollections and anecdotes that day were related to me previously or recorded to other interviewers—and often verbatim; perhaps it was due to the great number of interviews he has granted or the gift of total recall coupled with the happiest phrasing of thoughts. No matter: Capp was content to talk about everything in his career.

One would have supposed that Capp would be morose at such a juncture in his life. His strip, after a nose-dive in circulation, was to be killed. His daughter had just committed suicide in his garage several weeks earlier. His health—from an ill-fitting false leg to an atrophied "good" one to a bad case of emphysema—was pretty rotten ("Although I'm not going to do anything sensible like giving up *these* things," he said, lighting up one cigarette while another's smoke still circled his head. Another quip is, "It's simple. I enjoy smoking more than breathing."

But he said for his age (68) he shouldn't complain about his health. His daughter's death might have been, in a strained sense, a relief, as she had been troubled many years (Of far greater impact was the death of his beloved granddaughter several weeks later. A reporter for the Newark Star-Ledger, her car was hit by a drunk driver with no license at a red light; she was killed instantly. She was the third party at

On these two pages are the six dailies which appeared during the final week of LI'L ABNER. Don Michel, Editor of the Chicago Tribune-NY News Syndicate, was kind enough to furnish them to us.

LI'L ABNER
DO YOU DOUBT I COULD BECOME PRESIDENT?
IN YOUR-SHUDDER!- CONDITION, WHO WOULD STAND IN YOUR WAY!-
I'LL MAKE YOU HEAD OF THE FBI, FOSDICK!
OH, THANK YOU, BUM-
YOU CAN GET A SPLENDID VIEW OF YOUR NEW HOME-THE WHITE HOUSE -FROM UP THERE-
10.31
LI'L ABNER
YOU CAN SEE YOUR FUTURE HOME, BUM- FROM THE TOP OF THIS MONUMENT-
LEAN OUT FURTHER- THAT'S IT-THE WHITE HOUSE-
I DON'T LIKE WHITE-
11.1
I THINK I'LL HAVE IT PAINTED POIPLE- TO MATCH MY LIPS!
MY DUTY IS -SOB!- CLEAR!!
LI'L ABNER
MY COUNTRY!- I DO THIS FOR THEE!!-
?!?-YOU'RE PUSHING ME OUT!!-
DON'T WORRY, BUM- I'M COMING WITH YOU -ALL THE WAY!!
DAT'S ABOUT 700 OR 800 FEET-
11.V

Capp's Cambridge home during this interview.) But about the strip, more than anything else, he is most realistic.

He knew he had lost interest, that papers were dropping it and that it finally deserved to end. "For the last few years,' he said about a period of experimentation, newspaper shrinkage and loss of interest, "editors and readers who paid for the strip were being screwed."

The biographical and bibliographical data can be reviewed briefly. He was born Alfred Gerald Caplin in New Haven, Connecticut, on September 28, 1909; forty years later "Capp" would become his legal surname. The Caplin children were amused by the drawings of their father, an amateur cartoonist, and the young Al decided on art school instead of college. It turned out to be a succession of art schools, as the impoverished artist kept one step ahead of tuition bills.

As a youth two circumstances occurred that undoubtedly affected his career, if not his outlook on life. When he was nine he was run over by an ice truck, causing his leg to be amputated; after a year's convalescence he was fitted with a wooden appendage. And at 15 he temporarily left home to join a chum in hitchhiking through the South. Capp got his first taste of mountain folk (after bunking with an uncle, a Memphis rabbi) and was alternately charmed by Southern people and shocked at segregation.

After leaving two of the nation's better art schools, the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts and Boston's Museum School, he sought a job in New York.

"Harry Resnick (Capp's uncle) called the Associated Press and asked them to see me. And they did, and they actually gave me a job drawing a panel called *Col. Gilfeather,* which I knew would be a terrible job. I knew it because when I did the transition strips from Dick Dorgan's—he was TAD's brother, and he drew like a sort of ruptured, blind TAD—I copied his stuff and it was marvelous; all the guys around there said

LI'L ABNER
IT'LL ALL BE OVER IN A MINUTE—
1977 New York News Inc
All Rights Reserved
22— WHY DIDN'T YOU EXPLODE, BLUM?
DAT PLUTONIUM I WAS LOADED WIT IS— HO! HO! WORE OFF!— I AM AS HARMLESS AS A NEWBORN BABE!—
11.3
Coe Capp
YOU COULD HAVE DECEIVED ONLY AN IDIOT, BLUM!!—
RIGHT!

LI'L ABNER
I OUGHT TO SHOOT YOU, BLUM— BUT OF COURSE I CANNOT— UNLESS YOU BREAK A LAW!!—
DAT SATISFACTION YOU'LL -HAW!- NEVER GET!!—
Coe Capp 11.4
WHY— GASP!- GROAN!- DID YOU DO DIS TO ME?
YOU WALKED ON THE GRASS!- JUSTICE TRIUMPHS!!-
KEEP OFF THE GRASS

LI'L ABNER
AH TOLE YO' NOT TO DISTURB MISTAH CAPP!! HE GOT WORLD AFFAIRS ON HIS MIND!-
THAR'S ONE THING YO' HAIN'T GONNA FO'GIT—
SADIE HAWKINS DAY!!!
WILL NOVEMBER 26TH BE OKAY?
HA!- ANY DAY IS OKAY WHEN AN -UGH!- DOGPATCH MAIDEN KIN KETCH - SOB!- A DOGPATCH BACHELOR
Coe Capp 11.5

'you've got it!'

"But I thought, This isn't the way I draw, and I began doing this tremendous imitation of Phil May. He was a great artist, and I was copying his stuff from his prime and I was in my 20s—I didn't know anything but that I wanted to draw like him. After a long time, I still wasn't drawing like him—but I *was* closer to Phil May than I was to TAD. I don't know why anyone at AP accepted that stuff, but they did, for about three months or so. It was awful, but I was goddamned certain that that's where I was going.

"When I left *Gilfeather,* Milt Caniff took it over and probably made it a masterpiece.

"Now after I had done *Col. Gilfeather* for a few months, that's when I knew—or thought I knew—something more about anatomy, plots, perspective. I had *enough,* anyway, that I thought I could hit the syndicates again. I got a job with Ham Fisher, as you know—that's really not worth it—but anyway, I did do *Li'l Abner.* And it was exactly in the beginning as it is now; drawn a little differently of course, but the relationships were the same in that first year."

During this period, he lived a mad, exciting (but impoverished) life of a Greenwich Village artist. Legend has it that Ham Fisher, then scoring big with Joe Palooka, spotted Capp carrying a portfolio and bet his chauffeur that the fellow was a cartoonist. Verification supposedly led to employment, with Capp as one of a long line of Fisher underpaid and underthanked ghosts.

Capp introduced a hillbilly character, Big Leviticus, into an episode and soon, as Bill Blackbeard has said, was "feeling his ink." He longed to do his own strip and, of course, *Li'l Abner* was the concept he worked up.

Fisher became outraged that an assistant would desire independence, or was jealous, or whatever, but a long-running feud was inaugurated. Highlights were Capp's digs at

Fisher in the strip and in articles ("I Remember Monster" for the Atlantic Monthly) and Fisher's annual assertion in Palooka that Leviticus was the first comic-strip hillbilly; readers weren't aware that Capp was the anonymous creator of what Fisher was touting, and Fisher himself obviously didn't read *Barney Google.* The low points of the feud occurred when it became an obsession with Fisher. He photostated and enlarged panels from *Abner* which contained obvious phallic symbols (in various stages of employment) and sent them almost everywhere, including the National Cartoonists Society Ethics Committee. When it was discovered that Fisher had doctored the examples, he was bounced out of the NCS himself. Later he committed suicide.

"Anyway, I brought the *Abner* samples up to King Features and they offered me 250 bucks a week, which is the equivalent of a thousand—even more—today.

"But the big guy there—Connolly—said, Great strip, great art, yes sir. A couple of things, though: That Abner's an idiot. Make him a nice kid, with some saddle-stripe shoes on him. And Daisy Mae's pretty, but how about some pretty clothes? As a matter of fact, why not forget the mountain bit and move them all to New Jersey; and that Mammy, she's got to go—you need a sweet white-haired lady.

"Well, I thought all about it and I realized that I had *Polly and Her Pals!* But I had 250 bucks a week, didn't I? Well, I was pretty sick about it. I walked up to United Features—Bourjaily was the head of it then—and they looked at it, showed it to Colin Miller and the other salesmen, were amazed by it and wanted to take it out just as it was. They offered me 50 bucks a week—which was the lowest—and I grabbed it, and forgot King Features because I was now able to do my own strip exactly as I wanted to. Later on, of course, they paid me $5,000 a week, because there was no way they could get out of it."

The traditional tale of *Li'l Abner*'s sale has been related by Capp a thousand times. Capp's late uncle Harry, at that time an agent of sort., related to me that the problem at King Features simply was that they took too long to respond. I'm sure the truth is in both recollections. Capp's brother Elliott—a veteran comic-strip writer himself—has told me that Al's straight biography and his embellished versions of it are equally fascinating.

Did Capp have editorial control? "Well, the syndicate had control. I could be fired at any time—they owned it. I couldn't take that after a while and said 'I'm quitting. You can keep the strip.' I meant it.

"They got all upset, of course, and after a lot of running around they offered me a deal of a brand new contract,w ith new terms, and at the end of 10 years, the strip would become mine. Now you see there was an unwritten law that a successful strip had a life span of 12 years; I think that was Bill Conselman's rule—he wrote *Ella Cinders*—and it was figured that a strip had had it after a dozen years. Of course after 10 years I was going hotter than ever.

Li'l Abner's dates are August 13, 1934-November 13, 1977 (Sadie Hawkins week). It was an arresting strip, with frenetic action and bold color. Characterizations were fixed from the start.

By 1941 Abner was running in 400 newspapers; it was eventually to more than double that figure. In spite of the suspicion of syndicate claims at its death (350 papers), only two years ago—when the strip was conceded to be ailing—it still had 386 domestic and 52 foreign papers, quite a respectable list. And it doesn't represent the trick of some syndicates in counting daily and Sunday editions of the same paper separately.

Originally, *Abner's* Sunday top-strip was *Washable Jones,* about a 12-year-old hill boy who fished in a magic fishing hole and had talking trees for friends. It was a wonderful fantasy strip and deserves reprinting today.

"I'm so delighted that you remember it," Capp said. "It was fun but the syndicate decided they wanted a full page and that was it. Then came *Advice fo' Chillun,* which was great fun. That ran for years."

"I told Capp that hanging on the wall of The Museum of Cartoon Art in Rye, New York, is an *Advice fo' Chillun* homily sent in by little Mort Walker of Kansas City.

"He sent that in? To me? Well, bless us! That's great! He must have been around 12 at the time!"

I asked Capp about his favorite stories and characters.

"I loved Fosdick. You ask about Gould's reaction: Once we met and he said that Dick Tracy is the only major comic strip with another major comic strip doing full-time press agentry for it. And that's right.

"Apassionata van Climax ran for several years and—isn't it strange—never got us any complaints from editors. That was curious. I remember one of the things I didn't use was a male character named Bertram Bullsh. His name ended right at the S H.

"The Schmoo of course was a favorite, not only for commercial reasons, but historically. Of course, it was merchandised to death—I think they even had Schmoo toilet seats—and after a while I didn't want to be reminded of it. I had a lot of other things, but I had to come back to it a couple of times. It was never any fun, though, except in the first story."

I told him a favorite story of fans' was the Bald Iggle, and that at the syndicate in 1975 I suggested another story with a bleak ending.

"How did it end? The Schmoos' end was being beaten back into the Valley of the Schmoon—I think! I don't know. You see, I'm so embarrassed by my endings I try to forget them. But if I do look back, they're all right. They really are.

"I can remember just about everything. The stuff I remember is the great stuff—and that's the stuff I did last week. Everything ahead of me is horror!

"But, you see, it was too late then (in 1975). I came up whistling in the dark. I was totally unconvinced that I could do it any longer. The heart had gone out of me, maybe that year or so—before there were any great cancellations—but I knew it. It was time to think about getting off the stage. I meant every word I said (at that meeting); I felt I could do it again. But behind that I had another feeling: Jesus, I gotta get away from the studio."

In 1947 Capp sued United Features for $14-million in another dispute to garner more editorial freedom ("One thing I received almost immediately was 14-million denunciatory editorials from *Editor and Publisher,*" Capp quips). In the end he settled out of court with what *Time* termed "calculated magnanimity." The upshot was more and more freedom but inevitably less and less of a working relationship with UFS. In my days there—more than 10 years after Capp switched syndicates—there were still strong feelings of relief on the part of minor employees who were caught in tugs of war between meddling editors and a fussy artist.

As much as most modern strips, *Li'l Abner* was the result of a sort of production line. From the first couple of months of the strip, two full-time assistants were used, and although they remained for the remarkable length of the run, other artists came and went; the most recent penciller was Stan Drake, whom Capp characterized "a fantastic artist and a guy who never ages."

"When I say 'I' I mean these two guys equally with me. I'm the guy who signed the strip, and I made up our minds about what we would do, but both of them had just as much effect on the strip as I: Andy Amato and Harvey Curtis.

"I only inked the faces and hands; once in a while inked Abner. Walter Johnson would do a lot of the inking. Bob Lubbers, the last few years, too. We worked with Lubbers in many ways, and he was always very good, doing exactly what we wanted and on time. There are many sorts of things I'd do in the busy years that needed help, extra artwork."

I told Capp I had some half-inked originals with extremely tight pencils and whether this was because he wanted "his look" while not drawing it for reproduction.

"No, that's just the way I drew. That's the way Phil May drew. I went to art schools; never took a correspondence course—didn't trust them. Although Milt told me years later they were actually damn good courses."

I asked Capp about his influences and favorite cartoonists as a child.

"I grew up with Opper and Sterrett—now Sterrett! that's the guy who was the greatest. To think that a whole generation has grown up worshipping Picasso when the guy who did it far better was Sterrett! Far better than Picasso—and Herriman. I love Herriman—he has his own special place—but I love Sterrett; he belongs someplace else. He was a great man. I grew up on *Judge* and *Life* magazines and read what every other kid read. I loved the comics from the start, especially when I read that Bud Fisher married a fresh Ziegfeld Follies girl every couple of years–and could afford them all. That's for me, I said."

Were there any special literary humorists who were influential to him?

"Dickens, Benchley, Tarkington—he was a special favorite. I really didn't like most of the *New Yorker* writers, but Perelman, the way he fooled around with words, a master. I loved him, because I understood everything he said! I can't forget to mention the great army of American humorists—totally unknown but named Nat and Sol—all of whom were writing for radio. They were good, but nobody knew who they were. *Today* nobody knows who they were, but they were the great American humorists.

Since much of the art was someone else's, I asked Capp if the stories were 100 percent his.

"I'd write them in longhand at my desk, on yellow legal sheets. And I'd recite each line to the guys as I wrote and we'd knock it around. And that's how it worked for years.

"I would say, when we needed a new story, How about this? and we'd all say, Why not this? and, Let's try that,' until we were howling with laughter and that's how we wrote a story.

I would know vaguely where a story was going. I had an end—I really wanted to—but I left myself enough choice as I went along to go anywhere with it; I would always come back to that end.

"I found out through terrible, terrible agonies that you damn well better have that end or you'll wind up wanting to kill yourself."

Many syndicates demand of their artists that stories be no longer than 13 weeks. Did Capp have any such strictures?

"I would run a story as long as I wanted. You see, from very early, the people at United wouldn't *dare* make suggestions to me—they were scared to death of me. Except for one guy, Bill Laas; he had not the faintest respect for me. As a matter of fact, it was one day he said rather contemptuously, 'Hey, don't think of yourself as another Dickens. You're a guy who knows a trick: Abner doesn't marry Daisy Mae. Be grateful you thought of it, because that's what makes the strip go—nothing else.'

"Well, I was horrified. So I got them married. And it went. And a lot of publicity besides."

A goodly number of critics think that much of the life went out of the strip at that time—not out of the quality of writing or art, but the undeniable gimmick. It seems that a virtual dare is what led to the most famous marriage of the decade.

There was a certain type of mutual admiration between Capp and the comics' other master storyteller, Harold Gray, even while they were on different sides of the ideological fence.

"I met Harold Gray only once. When I was younger I loved what he was doing—I thought it was the most dangerous crap I had ever seen but I loved it and how he did it. See, I knew that that guy could really draw; these insane figures with about as much vitality as the Easter Island statues, but they were real and forbidding and said the most incredible things.

"The only time I met him he took me aside and said, You're making some money now. Buy a farm and build a great big stone wall around it because they're coming—the bums and the Russians. Well, I said, Thank you very much, and promptly bought a farm!"

I remarked that most critics of Gray, even when they had reasoned arguments, assume that he was an inept realist, when he was in fact a superb impressionist. I fear that even Capp's brother, Elliott, who wrote the strip from 1968 to 1974, fell into this trap, along with Tex Blaisdell, the artist.

"Oh, boy, you bet your life Gray knew how to draw. He drew *his* way and he perfected that way so that unless you took him very seriously you were going to do a flimsy and totally unconvincing copy, and that's what they did. And Elliott, the lovable idiot—forgive me for saying this about my brother!—decided to do a tongue-in-cheek *Orphan Annie*. It was horrifying; it's meant to be done straight. Gray meant every bit of it. Of course, Elliott didn't enjoy doing it."

At a symposium in 1975 on the shrinking size of comics, everyone waited for Capp to climax the jeremiads of Chester Gould and Roy Crane, but he stunned the audience by preaching accomodation down the line.

"Sure it hurt," he recalled. "But I figured, What the hell, if everybody else is doing it, why can't I do it? And I could except that, you know, it took some of the heart out of it. But the great guy, the guy who really stays with this is Milt Caniff (Capp remains the only personage in newspapering who accents the first syllable of that name). He keeps doing that goddamn strip as beautifully as he ever did, and writes as gracefully. It runs so small I don't know if anyone can read it, but he still does it."

Capp overcompensated in the desire to make local editors happy. His strips began to look empty, readers felt cheated by too many one-panel strips and the stories were too short. An impression of his later strips sticks in the mind [illegible] or nine huge words crowding out a couple of boreheads; maybe tomorrow's papers will tell us who's uttering the dialog. Of course, it wasn't that bad but the last few years of *Abner* illustrated one of the widest extremes in the career of any American cartoonist. It seemed that the man who had understood—and used—the art form as totally as anyone before or since had utterly lost touch with the elements.

This is not gratuitous; Capp knew it himself. But losing touch, losing papers, losing interest—all these factors did not lead him to the deadly solution of abandoning a valuable property to a staff that did not understand it, as in the case of *Annie* after Gray.

"I thought about ghosts, but I said, screw it—I'm not going to give *Abner* to some kid to change; let him do his stuff while we bury *Abner* honorably. And it would have been nice to include a final note on the last strip: On Monday this space will be occupied by a fresh new cartoonist."

Another inescapable factor is that when Capp's politics—or targets—changed, there were an awful lot of editors out there gunning

"I really don't think my politics changed. You see, I've always been for those who are being shamed, disgraced, ignored, by other people. That group has changed. Now it's the poor bastard who's rich—well, I don't mean rich, and of course I always had Bullmoose—but the poor son of a bitch who worked, who was being denounced by the Liberals. For Chrissakes, these people are keeping the country afloat. They were denounced, and it got me damn mad. So I talked about it, and I continued to talk, because one of the things I found was that when I was all for liberal attitudes—and I believed in them—the Conservatives showed me only icy contempt. I never got a letter from them. They just hated me. When I began attacking the Liberals, the Conservatives maintained their icy silence, but the Liberals began denouncing by the thousands of letters every week!

"I started asking myself, with these letters, How could a girl from Smith *know* this language? and How the hell did a clergyman learn that expression?—they denounced me in the foulest terms. And I must say that it convinced me that if this is what attracted Liberals, I better keep at it.

"When I started to mock the Liberals, there came such a deluge of hate mail—instantly my radio commentary show was ended; my TV show, which would have started in 56 markets, never began; I was never again asked as a guest on the air. Critics who had recently called me the great comic historian of our time, now denounced me as a bitter fascist.

"I got a lot of flak, of course, but at that time I was all right. I had all the money I needed, and thought, Well gee whiz, I've simply got to do this and as long as I last with this strip I've simply got to say it. I really couldn't do anything else; I really couldn't. So I did it. One of the side effects is that I saw the strip begin to lose—but I said, The hell with it."

In retrospect, does Capp think commentary has a place in comics?

"Comic art not only should say something about the status quo: It must. The message is in the art that is brought to any medium. A work of art is a work of art regardless of form, size or material. People have been brainwashed—if it's in a comic strip, in a daily newspaper, and done with pen and ink, it's supposed to be a contemptible trifle. That's self-swindling snobbishness."

In the realm of traditional "art," canvases, I recalled that Capp had a grand showing of pop-art type *Abner* paintings in New York a few seasons ago. Do modern currents in art appeal to him?

"Modern art is the revelation of disordered minds. It is created by the untalented, sold by the unscrupulous and bought by the uninformed. Genuine art today is found only in auto ads, fashion drawings and comic strips. And comic strips are the best art being produced in America today. I judge them by the same standards I apply to Daumier and Michelangelo. And by those standards comic-strip art is damn good."

Abner's fame grew (he switched syndicates for more control and higher profits in 1964) with the classic stories and characters that sprang from Capp's mind: The Schmoos, limitless providers of the needs of mankind; the Kigmies, classic emotional outlets ("Little creatures with targets on their asses," Capp described); the Bald Iggle, a look into whose eyes made the gazer unable to lie. All these characters represented threats to order and exploitation and therefore were doomed to annihilation. Also in the parade are Fearless Fosdick, Marryin' Sam, Moonbeam McSwine, Abijah Gooch, Hairless Joe, Lonesome Polecat, and a cast of thousands after the Yokums themselves.

What made *Li'l Abner* a comedy and not a humorous tragedy—thematics aside—was Capp's method of characterization. Unlike Bunyan, who used representation (Harold Gray was his closest mentor in the comics), Capp used personification. His characters were virtues and vices incarnate—and better yet, they reveled in such states. Not one of the residents of Dogpatch ever felt an ounce of remorse for the rottenness, greed, lust or filth he or she possessed—only joy.

Hence, *Li'l Abner* became more than a Morality Play. It was a vast, 43-year panorama of the worst and misguided best in all types of

our fellowman and—shudder!—ourselves. Mammy represented the American matriarch to the -*n*th degree, and Gen. Bullmoose, the quintessential finance capitalist, had more avarice in his pinkie than two generations of *Orphan Annie* critics have found in all of Daddy Warbucks.

In the end, it might have been the very overpoliticization of everything in our culture that did *Li'l Abner* in—in spite of the fact that Capp's fusilades were aimed directly at this new state of affairs. For he was forced to deal with the new targets in a sense on their turf: everywhere. In the past politics were a small portion of what he attacked. Now that politics pervaded the culture it just about followed that the strip began to run in one track. Oh, Capp still aimed at things like the oil crisis and TV mindlessness—and Fosdick was always there—but friends and enemies alike began to expect politics in the strip at every turn.

In the readers' minds it became an obsession even greater than the Eternal Question of whether Abner and Daisy Mae would marry. It was a trap impossible to escape. Walt Kelly occupied the last few years of his daily *Pogo* with a heavy dose of politics and he, too, felt the compulsion to be ever more strident. And the result in his case was a sorry imitation of the brilliant political satires of the '50s.

If one desires the reduced argument, it can be suggested that Capp is the ultimate anti-establishmentarian. In the '60s he merely recognized that there was a new Establishment, as entrenched and influential as any in our history: the internationalist senators, an elitist and hypocritical judiciary and bureaucracy, a biased media, the Social-Industrial complex, and the campus bed-wetters who, for reasons partly demographic and mostly inexplicable, were deified by this new Establishment. Capp never changed his role; the targets merely replaced each other between acts.

Perhaps the most famous of his new targets, after Ted Kennedy who appeared occasionally as a smug plutocrat, was Joanie Phoanie, a character many readers saw as a parody of Joan Baez. "I really based her on a type, not an individual," Capp insists. "Although I had Joan herself to deal with in speeches as the greatest wartime singer since Tokyo Rose."

"As a target, she was to me like Joe McCarthy. They both lied to us, but both based their crusades on a grain of truth. In the '50s there was indeed a Communist menace, but McCarthy went too far. And we did have poor people in America when she was singing about them—but no country has ever done more than ours in trying to pull people out of poverty."

Joanie was an idol of SWINE, Students Wildly Indignant About Nearly Everything—Capp's acronymous portrait of the "new KKK—they only changed their initials." His epithets were widely quoted alike by campus foes and those who found him a New Right hero, from the deliberately malapropped "Women's Lip" to the recognition of the real martyrs at Kent State—the National Guard young men.

That John Steinbeck (who has traveled many of the ideological roads of Capp, through Vietnam to today) called Capp "our greatest satirist since Sterne" and that Capp deserved the Pulitzer Prize years before Garry Trudeau was born are true. Much has been made of his satire, but not as much of his art. Partly this is just, because even by his own admission the strip was a production line with very little of the art his. But he was a talented artist and a very conscious one: In the early years of the strip, afraid of infant mortality in his field, he devised a visual method of coping. The dramatic angles, the free use of blacks, the neon-like lettering and onomatopoeia—all were utilized to draw attention to the strip that might otherwise have been lost in a sea of others on a comics page.

What remains for future critics to compliment in Capp is an area that has been little explored—his logical place in the succession of American literary humorists, the local colorists and dialect writers. No matter that he was a Jew from the Northeast and that Dogpatch hardly even approximated a real part of the Ozarks or anywhere else; Capp's milieu and method put him squarely and prominently in the tradition of such as Sut Lovingood, Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. Nasby, Mark Twain, Kin Hubbard, Ring Lardner and, after him, Walt Kelly. Capp represents a type of literary humor as purely American as—the comic strip.

For all his accolades, the world still has a long way to go to recognize the genius of Al Capp. He is a man who was—for most of his career—totally in command of his medium, a sagacious critic, a humorist of the first order. Other bright lights of this profession of cartooning have fulfilled their talents through strips—Mort Walker and Charles Schulz come to mind immediately—but Capp, while starting at the drawing board, has transcended his creation.

Aside from the fact that he became a public personality, Capp made the strip a mere facet of himself rather than the reverse which is often the case with most strips and their producers. Readers would *read* more than he *wrote*, and with justice, because the world of Capp—for all its freewheeling wildness—represented a structured view of life. From such a structure grew a wondrous web of implications, a system of phenomenology, ontology and iconography that made us feel privileged to be visitors to his mind.

Lest this conclude sounding like a—sob!—obituary, let us also feel grateful that Capp can relish the matured adulation to come in his lifetime. Let us hope that his works—which now may include an autobiography, compilations, another Broadway play and who can predict what else—will continue for a long time; and, unlike Daisy Mae, that he'll never feel past his prime.

These four pages originally appeared in LIFE Magazine.

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Capp has exploited one of the secrets of great comedy, which is to make the beholder feel sympathetic with the comic hero and also superior to him. In Dogpatch he has created a yokel's paradise where everybody loafs and eats turnips and pork chops until they are jolted out of it by some disaster which they bring about by their own innocence and avarice. Capp—who is suspected, with reason, of mixing in social and political criticism—has involved his people in fearfully complicated plots which he never really explains in the captions that start below. But the incidents serve to recall a fantastic array of characters with the greatest collection of bizarre names ever conceived—the verminous Scragg family, the bumbling Senator Phogbound, Moonbeam McSwine and beautiful Appassionata Van Climax. Now these creatures are brought to life on Broadway as shown on pages 81 to 83.

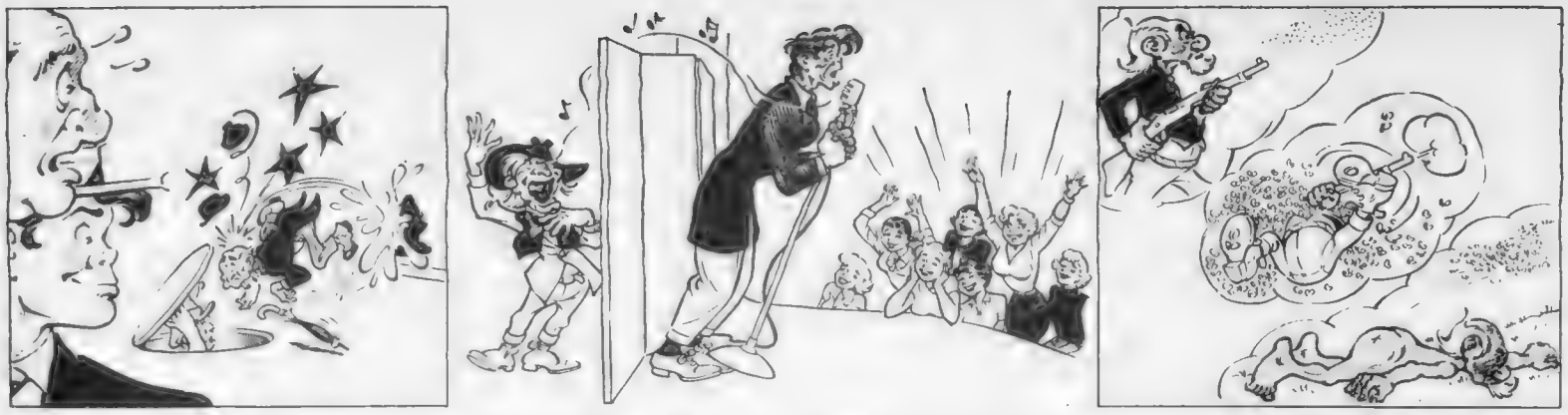
CARTOONIST AL CAPP, CREATOR OF LI'L ABNER

The story of Li'l Abner [says Al Capp in this biography of his hero] began in August 1934. He was then six feet three, and 19 years old, and still is. Being a typical, red-blooded One Hundred Percent American boy, his main interests were eating, sleeping, not working much and avoiding marriage. Mainly what he always wanted from life was no trouble. So, mainly, that's what life has always given him. All this trouble, however, has not made him any more careful, or less hopeful. For years his Mammy and Pappy (*center*) nagged him to marry Daisy Mae Scragg. For years, Daisy Mae herself tried to catch him on Sadie Hawkins Day.

Other Scraggs pursue Li'l Abner, too. Daisy Mae's Oncle Romeo and his Cro-Magnon chillun, Lem and Luke, but with murder, not matrimony as the object. Frankly, I can't say what started the feud. The way I understand it is these Scraggs hate all humans, so they hate Li'l Abner most because he's more human than most people. The boys couldn't rescue their beloved Pappy from the hot seat, so they brought the hot seat along, too, and a chunk of the death house floor. And Li'l Abner can't escape to the peace of the city. For on Park Avenue lives his Aunt Bessie, who exposes him to such irresistible debutantes as Mimi Van Pett.

EF YO' IS GONNA MARRY MAH CHILE, YO' GOTTA SCRUB THET STUFF OFFA YORE FACE!! TH' ONLY THING A DOGPATCH LADY PAINTS IS HER PIGPEN!
YAS'M!!—DO THIS OFFISHULLY BREAK OUR INGAGEMENT?
STOP!! I'D RATHER DIE THAN SPEND ANOTHER MINUTE WITH ANY YOKUM!!

Fortunately, his Mammy, as irresistible in her own wrinkled, scrawny old way as any dimpled, delectable debutante, is always invited to the wedding, so the weddings never come off, and back goes Li'l Abner to more simple, manly fun, such as Mountain Football, which is played with a small mountain instead of a football. But life takes Li'l Abner back to New York where he meets Bet-a-Million Bashby (*far right*), the pride of all American, 100% red-blooded billionaire-hood. Bashby achieved his fabulous fortune by strictly adhering to a simple formula, namely, "Always bet on a sure thing and always bet with a fool."



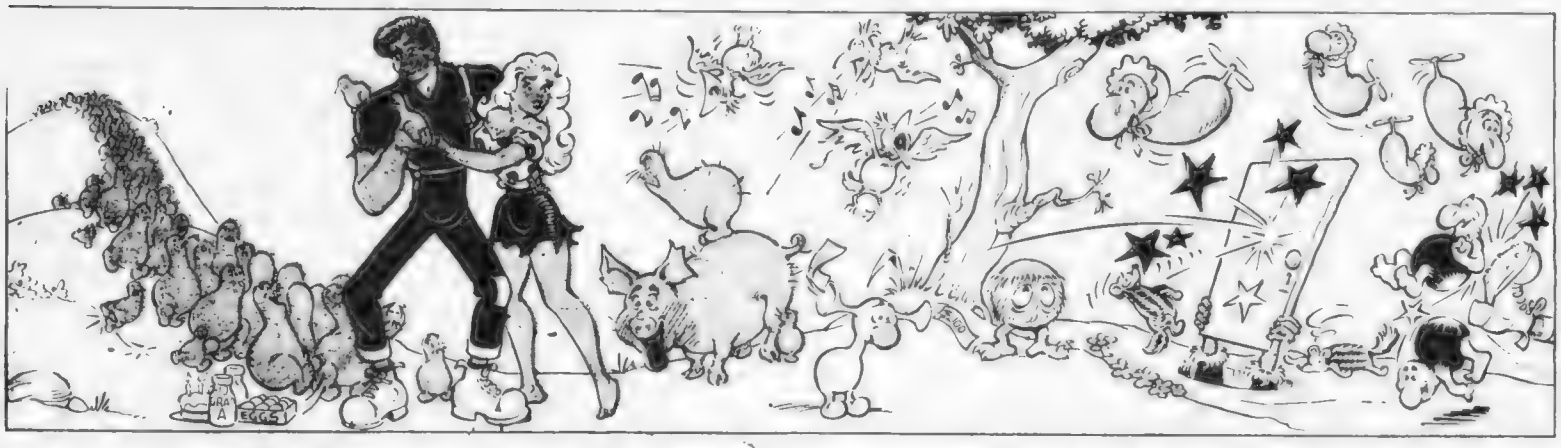
Bashby bet a man could safely cross a totally empty street. Li'l Abner bet that he couldn't. A hydrant exploded as a sewer opened. Abner won. By December 1944 the Frank Sinatra panic was on. Concertino Constipato, with a million dollars' worth of talent and a dime's worth of appeal, starved Li'l Abner into resembling Sinatra and used him as a front man. [Sinatra loved this story. Last year I did one about a delicious piano player. Liberace loathed it.] Every year Dogpatch raises a crop of turnips, and every year Pappy Yokum is chosen to guard the crop against the terrible annual plague of turnip termites and every year *this* happened.

By 1945, Li'l Abner's innocence had gotten him into nightmarish problems with such Dogpatch neighbors as (*from left*) Lonesome Polecat and Hairless Joe ("The Kickapoo Joy Juice needs more body, so let's throw a body in"); Weakeyes Yokum; Joe Btfsplk; Available Jones; Young Eddie McSkonk; Tobacco Rhoda; Earthquake McGoon; Professor Adam LaZonga; Soft-hearted John; Moonbeam McSwine and her Pappy Moonshine, who raised her the same way he raises his hawgs; Smilin' Zack; Black Rufe; Barney Barnsmell (loneliest boy in town on account of his job which is Inside Man at the Skonk Works), and Widder Fruitful.

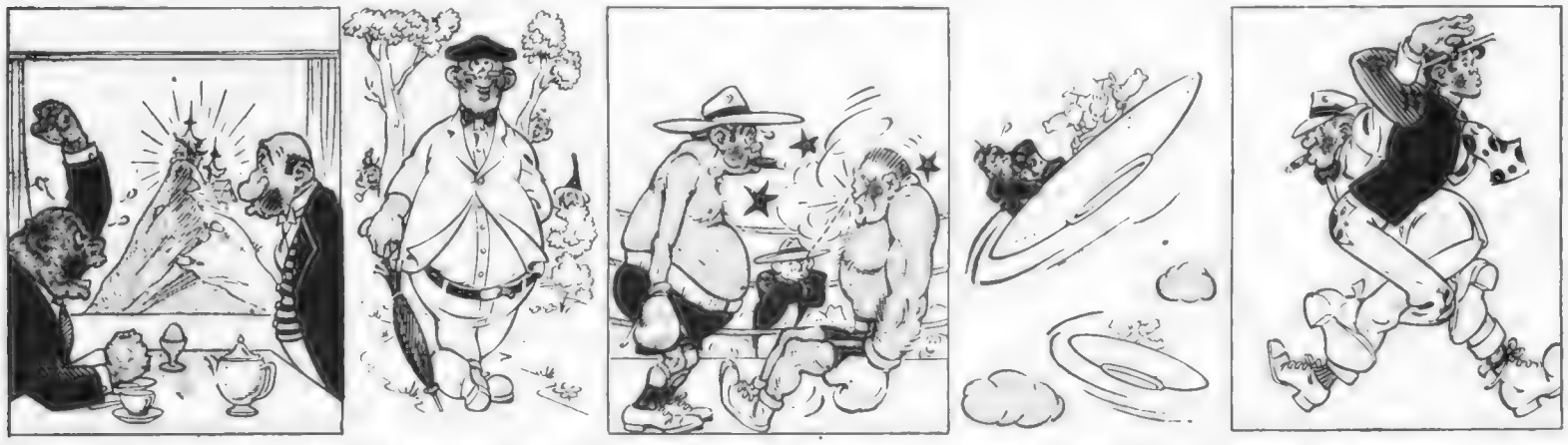
In the city Li'l Abner has had agonizing experiences with The Untouchable (*far left*); H'Inspector Blugstone; Senator Jack S. Phogbound; Dumpington Van Lump; Reactionary J. Repugnant; Leslie Love (ideal of all women with nagging backaches); Evil Eye Fleegle (whose triple Whammy melts a battleship); Cedric Softwick; Appassionata Van Climax; Flea-Brain; Hamilton Fatback; Big Stanislouse; Westbrook P. Buckingham; Sir Cecil Cesspool ("We Cesspools are deep: there's a certain air about us"); Minnie Mustache; Orson Waggon (at seven he had written more complicated novels than Tolstoy, louder operas than Wagner).

In 1945 Li'l Abner encountered the Wolf-Gal, a beauty whose duty was to attract boys to provide food for her ravening Wolf-Pack. In February 1946 Li'l Abner himself was called upon to provide 6,000 free ham sandwiches to keep devastated Dogpatch alive for six months. As he started off on his humanitarian quest, his starving neighbors shouted after him careful instructions—"Light on th' mustard on mine, boy," "Easy on th' butter, heavy on th' mustard wif mine!" "Two wif lettuce." In April 1946 Li'l Abner discovered snowbound Lower Slobbovia where the favorite dish of the natives is raw polar bear and vice versa.

In Lower Slobbovia Abner almost married Lena the Hyena, a girl so frightful that even I could not draw her. I appealed to the public for help. Over a million blood-freezing drawings poured in. This is Basil Wolverton's—ugh! prizewinner (*far left*). In August 1947 Abner met Skelton McCloset, who needed deep inspiration for his composition *Sonata to a Dying Blonde* and Daisy Mae obligingly almost died. On Sadie Hawkins Day 1947, out of the ice, where she's been preserved for 2,000 years, roared the Viking Girl, Tenderlief Ericson. And on August 31, 1948, came the Shmoo, the all-purpose animal which saved Dogpatch from starvation.



The gentle and cooperative little Shmoos lay both eggs and milk, neatly packaged, and marked "Grade A." After the Shmoon came over the mountain to Dogpatch other animals followed; Nogoodniks (bad Shmoos); Mimikniks (birds who sing like anybody they've ever heard) [those who've heard Maria Callas are valuable, those who've heard George Jessel are killed]; Boar Skarloff; the Money-Ha-Has (who lay money instead of eggs); Bald Iggles whose gaze made everybody tell the truth; the Shminks (make shmink coats, can be captured only by braining 'em with kitchen doors); the Moon-Critters; and the Kigmies who loved to be kicked.


I'LL (YAWN!) LOOK AT A SAMPLE OF YOUR WORK, HEADSMAN- BUT, DON'T MESS UP THE RUG!!
OH, WHAT AN HONOR TO HAVE MY CHEAP HEAD LOPPED OFF, BY THAT EXPENSIVE SWORD!!

In April 1947 vacationing Pork King, J. Roaringham Fatback, was amazed to find that Dogpatch cast a shadow on his breakfast egg. He had Dogpatch moved, instead of the egg. One-Fault Jones ambled along in August 1948. Evil Eye Fleegle's triple Whammy nearly won the championship for undeserving Noel (Battling) McNoodnik in February 1950. During July of that year Li'l Abner took a discouraging tour of our planet with a bunch of fellas, sort of, and in January 1951 he got so tightly tied up with another rassler that they couldn't be untied so they went into the rassling business together as "The Octopus."

In June 1951 Daisy Mae became the reluctant bride-to-be of Hassan the Unspoiled, and Abner his reluctant headsman. In August 1951 he was given a scholarship to the Barbers College, Scalp U. Mammy sent him off proper, with the fabled Dogpatch Ham which never gave out. But it was just his luck to have, as a roommate, Burping Buffalo, who was majoring in Scalp Treatments and needed assistance with his homework. With the help of Imogene Coma, Li'l Abner escaped with his head, only to have Nightmare Alice, the cut-rate Conjurin' Woman, her niece, Scary Lou and Doctor Babaloo of the Belgian Congo, try to boil it.

Des Moines
Dear Mr. Capp — How long are you going to keep poor Daisy Mae chasing Li'l Abner? I am disgust if you don't
N.Y City
Dear Al Capp: Unless Daisy & Abner married. I am going
AN' SO AH PRONOUNCES YO', YO' PANIC-STRICKEN LOUT, AN' YO', YO' JUICY YOUNG MORSEL--- MAN AN' WIFE!!-
$1.35, PLEASE!!
YO' BIN MARRIED 3 MONTHS!! IT'S TIME YO' KISSED YORE WIFE!!
?? WHAT DOES YO' THINK AH IS- A SISSY?

For 18 years indignant readers had been demanding, in waves of increasing violence and numbers, that I let Li'l Abner marry Daisy Mae. I'd been having a fine time, for 18 years, kidding America. However, the Senator McCarthy theory that anyone who laughed at his country was a dangerous traitor made it unsafe to kid anything but something we all agree is absurd. So I decided to sit McCarthy out and kid marriage. Finally on March 29, 1952, I married them. Li'l Abner, Daisy Mae and the Dogpatch Ham started off on their honeymoon. Abner and the Ham had a fine time. Nobody paid much attention to Daisy Mae.

With a wife to provide for, Li'l Abner became chief designer and crescent cutter for the Little Wonder Privy Company. The Scraggs dropped in on them in September 1952, and in the massacre that followed, Daisy Mae's nose was broken. Humiliated by her resemblance now to Rocky Graziano, she retired into a paper bag. In February 1953 that legendary gunfighter of the Old West, Wild Bill Hickup, triumphantly finished up his 100-year sentence, was stopped on his bloody trail of revenge by Disgustin' Jones. In June 1953 out of his freezer came General Bullmoose ("What's good for General Bullmoose is good for the country!")

On August 27, 1953, after a pregnancy that ambled on so long that readers began sending me medical books, a baby was born. But readers' relief turned into anguish when the infant became wedged in a drainpipe, while being bathed in an unplugged sink. At his first sight of a pork chop, "Honest Abe" valiantly leaped out of his iron diapers. On September 13, 1954, "Tiny" Yokum arrived. Mammy had collapsed in a neighbor's house feeling rotten, 15½ years ago. She woke up in much better shape, and left. Happening to be in Dogpatch for the first time since then, the neighbor returned the baby Mammy had had in her house.

Well, those have been the major inconveniences of Li'l Abner's life up to 1955. 1956 was hardly worth living either. Bilious, bitter, bachelor billionaire Chester Ghoul last month bet $10,000 a week he would wreck Abner's happy marriage. He very nearly did. Two weeks ago Moonshine, pappy of Moonbeam McSwine, horrified Boston's sensitive Henry Cabbage Cod with the McSwine Husband-Trapping system. Soon Abner will accompany General Bullmoose to Slobbovia to trap Bashful Bulganik. As for Honest Abe, my heart bleeds for him. Slithering into his li'l life is MILTON, THE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED BABY SITTER.

OTTO MESSMER

AND FELIX THE CAT

Felix the Cat was the first cartoon superstar, and at the height of his fame in the mid-1920s he was as popular with the movie audiences around the world as Charlie Chaplin , Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd. The reason for his great success was that Felix was the first cartoon to express an individual personality in drawings that move. Felix was able to think, to reason, to solve problems and to communicate his ideas and desires to audiences. He also displayed a wild disregard for reality, and he had a vitality and an inventiveness that had often eluded American animated cartoons, derived as they were from static comic strips in newspapers. Felix the Cat became an immediate success after his first appearance in 1919, and Pat Sullivan claimed for himself all the credit for the creation and development of the character. While Sullivan did produce the films and did promote Felix to world-wide fame and fortune, the true genius behind Felix the Cat was a shy artist named Otto Messmer.

The following interview with Otto Messmer, as well as the additional comments, are from the final script of the 25-minute film 'Otto Messmer and Felix the Cat,' produced, written, directed and narrated by John Canemaker. The film is copyrighted by Mr. Canemaker and we're much indebted to him for permission to give our readers this information.

We have indicated which comments are by Otto Messmer, those which were made by veteran animator, Al Eugster, and the interspersed narration and explanatory information by John Canemaker. Messmer, now 84, lives in New Jersey.

OTTO MESSMER: In those days a lot of people said that some of the attempts we made were impossible—they couldn't be done. A Cat can't tip its ears like a hat or walk like a human being, but I did that. I sort of defied it and tried it and the audience roared at it. Most artists were looking at the art form of motion and I thought I would concentrate more on the gags. Most of the others in the field were striving too much for animation in those early days, but I used to go to the theatre and listen and if I saw things that made people laugh, this was the course to follow.

CANEMAKER: Felix the Cat was created for the movie screen and he belonged there. A critic wrote in 1928: "He has escaped the reality of the cat. He is made up of an extraordinary personality. When he is walking like a man preoccupied, with his head buried in his shoulders, his paws behind his back, he becomes the impossible in cats, the unreal in man. Nothing is more familiar to him than the extraordinary and when he is not surrounded by the fantastic, he creates it."

The late Pat Sullivan was a hard-drinking Australian immigrant who had worked as a lightweight boxer, a movie exhibitor, and a newspaper cartoonist on the New York World. He opened an animation studio with a small staff in 1915. When Sullivan hired young Otto Messmer the next year, he put him to work thinking up gags and animating on a series of Charlie Chaplin cartoons. Messmer studied films of Chaplin and photos of his eloquent, refined pantomimes, and this scrutiny paid off three years later when Messmer began to define the personality of Felix the Cat.

OTTO MESSMER: Chaplin sent us at least thirty photographs of himself in different poses. He was delighted because this helped the propagation of his pictures. He encouraged us, and autographed these photographs, and we copied every little movement that he did. This careful study rubbed off on us and later we used a lot of that kind of action in Felix. We thought a funny walk, or the wiggling of a tail, sometimes would get a laugh without even a script idea. Chaplin had a great influence on us.

CANEMAKER: It was Messmer who created Felix and developed his personality for 14 years. Messmer never received public recognition for his work until recently, and he never shared in the enormous financial profits that Sullivan enjoyed from Felix.

OTTO MESSMER: Paramount was falling behind in its schedule, they needed an extra cartoon to fill in, and Sullivan, being very busy, told me that if I wanted to do it on the side, I could do any little thing to satisfy them. So I figured a cat would be about the simplest—all black without worrying about outlines. One gag after the other, and they all got laughs. Paramount liked it so they ordered a series, one a month. In the first drawings Felix was more angular, like a dog, but we found out that it was a little difficult when you started moving these angles. So we rounded out the figures—it was easier that way. A ball was easier to turn than a box or an angle. The ball was much smoother and easier to look at, while angles are stiffer.

Mr. King of Paramount Magazine, used to call the cartoon 'Feline Follies' up to that point, but suggested that we might give it the name of Felix. We kicked the idea around a bit and then decided that this was it—meaning feline and felicity. Good luck cat.

CANEMAKER: One of Felix's most famous characteristics was his walk while thinking.

OTTO MESSMER: Impatience—you know. Walking up and down—looking for a solution for something. He represents the thoughts of any child, wondering what things are all about—what's up in the sky, under the sea and so forth. His little eye motions indicated how he was thinking. He frowned and wore a puzzled look as his eyes shifted from side to side until a kind of light over his head would give him the

FELIX THE CAT—drawings by Otto Messmer. (Courtesy of the John Canemaker Collection)

John Canemaker (center) with Mr. and Mrs. Otto Messmer during the filming of Canemaker's documentary film, "Otto Messmer and Felix the Cat"—June 1976.

solution to a problem. He'd often use a question mark for a hook and an exclamation point for a ball and a bat.

CANEMAKER: Felix became a star. It has been estimated that over three quarters of the world's population either saw Felix the Cat on the screen or knew him as a comic strip character. These movie and newspaper appearances were the keystone of a million dollar industry of toys, mascots, phonograph records, sheet music and advertising that anticipated Walt Disney's later success in marketing *his* fantasies. Pat Sullivan had copyrighted the character and so reaped the benefits of Felix's popularity, fame and money.

OTTO MESSMER: The cartoons were produced under the name 'By Pat Sullivan.' That meant the studio. Very few people in those days got credit. Most people in the industry knew that I was running the studio for Sullivan but the public was only aware of 'By Sullivan.'

CANEMAKER: Al Eugster, a veteran animator who has worked for both Max Fleischer and Walt Disney, began his long career in 1925 at the age of sixteen at the Sullivan Studio, and he was hired by Otto Messmer.

AL EUGSTER: Otto Messmer was sort of Mr. Felix the Cat himself—he was synonymous with Felix. He was the director and handed out the work to the animators. Of course at the time I wasn't an animator but just a blackener—putting the blacks on the cat. Pat Sullivan himself I didn't see too much of. He'd come in occasionally and then he'd go into his office. I don't think Pat was involved creatively so Otto would think up the ideas. I wasn't conscious of a script lying around the studio—everything just sorta came out of Otto's head. Besides all this creativity, every Friday Otto would go to the bank and pick up the payroll and we would get paid.

OTTO MESSMER: To begin with we were doing the cartoons for Margaret Winkler but then we grew to the point where we were doing them for Educational Films—the big one. Before we went with Educational I'd been able to handle things alone or maybe with just one assistant and a couple of young fellows to blacken in. But when the change came we had to add people like Al Eugster, George Canata, some young fellows starting, and an occasional guest animator.

AL EUGSTER: Otto would give out the scenes to the animators and when their drawings were made they'd bring the scene back to Otto who would flip the drawings and then either give his O.K. or suggest changes. We had to do a picture every two weeks for Educational.

OTTO MESSMER: We had sort of a casual way of sitting around. I didn't sit at a big pompous desk pointing. We just sat around discussing and making little sketches and decided things that way.

AL EUGSTER: I don't know how he got all these things done because just animation itself is quite an undertaking. Besides doing the current ideas, Otto was thinking of ideas for the next picture coming up.

CANEMAKER: The site of the old Felix the Cat studio was near the corner of Broadway and 63rd Street, where a seafood restaurant—Aunt Fish—now stands. In a narrow room on the second floor, about a dozen men toiled over light tables and animated Felix to life.

OTTO MESSMER: Some of the people who were there besides Sullivan and myself were Raoul Barre, Dana Parker, Hal Walker, Jack Bogel, George Canata, Charlie Birns, Mr. Thurber and of course, Al Eugster. Thurber was the cameraman.

AL EUGSTER: While we inkers and painters were waiting for Otto to give us the animation we would go to the back area of the studio and

Otto Messmer (left) and Pat Sullivan c. 1925

play a form of baseball with a mailing tube and a wad of paper. One time it landed on Mr. Thurber's camera, and we still like to think he photographed the paper.

OTTO MESSMER: After Educational started releasing two cartoons a month they became very popular and of course Felix appeared daily and Sunday in the newspaper comic strip distributed by King Features Syndicate. As I mentioned earlier there developed tremendous royalties from toys and books, etc., and Pat Sullivan from then on took it kinda easy with his chauffeur and car, and we very seldom saw him. We tried several times to suggest that he expand but he said, "Why change?" The market was there but he said, "It's doin' O.K. now." That's why we didn't get into sound or color, or any of those things.

There was a tragic story about Mrs. Pat Sullivan. Their chauffeur had brought her back to their apartment in the Willard Hotel one day, and she told him she'd let him know if she needed him further. After a few minutes she leaned out the window to tell him to go back to the garage, but she leaned out too far and fell out the window and that was it. Well, this didn't help him any you know—kinda broke him up and it didn't help his drinking problem either. We hardly ever saw him at the studio—we were finishing a contract, dickering for renewal with another company, and in the meantime he died. Now we had an unfinished series but his lawyer just closed the studio. I had no authority, being a salaried man under him, and I didn't own any part of the studio. I couldn't have started a new contract but I *could* have finished the old one.

CANEMAKER: Felix fell into oblivion for almost 25 years. Then in 1959 the revival of Felix began when veteran animator/producer Joe Oriolo produced 260 new Felix cartoons for television. This sparked interest in the *old* Felix cartoons, and eventually, due to the recent reassessment of animation as an art form by film scholars and historians, the truth about Otto Messmer's contributions to that art at last became public.

AL EUGSTER: I don't know if I ever told you, Otto, that while I was blackening in Felix, I used to draw little cartoons inside his outline and then blacken over them, sort of to give my work a little variety. There was a lot of black on those cartoons but it did make a good appearance.

OTTO MESSMER: Black moves easier on the eye. You see we never changed our methods. At Disney's they were working with an art form—he had the finest artists in America and they made masterpieces. A lot of the artists kinda looked down on you if you made a round ball with a head on it—a comical figure doin' little comical actions—and I think they kinda resented this but they took a year to make a film, and we were turning one out every couple of weeks.

Felix dances with Ann Pennington c. 1926.

John Canemaker is a prolific writer of animation history and he is the author of the recently published book, 'The Animated Raggedy Ann & Andy—An Intimate Look at the Art of Animation: Its History, Techniques, and Artists.' He is an independent animator/filmmaker whose films have been screened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, at the Kennedy Center in Washington and at various film festivals. He wrote and hosted a two-part CBS-TV Camera Three program about the Warner Brothers cartoon directors, and he has animated several segments of Sesame Street, Captain Kangaroo and The Electric Company. Recently he has been making a number of appearances with his films 'Remembering Winsor McCay' and 'Otto Messmer and Felix The Cat'. In March 1978 he will speak and show animated films at the USA Film Festival in Dallas and it looks as though he may be touring Europe next summer with his PIONEERS show for the State Department/USIA. .We might add that he is also the Animation Editor of Millimeter magazine. Incidentally, John is available for lecture/screenings with a program that includes the two documentaries we mentioned a moment ago, titled 'American Animation Pioneers', and which also includes short films by early moving-cartoon veterans such as J.S. Blackton, J.R. Bray, Max Fleischer and others. Anyone interested in booking his show may contact Canemaker at 120 West 70th Street, New York, N.Y. 10023. Phones are (212) 874-7462 or JU6-6300.

John Canemaker's studio in New York City with a storyboard for a new "personal" animated film.

Photos by Jim Ruth

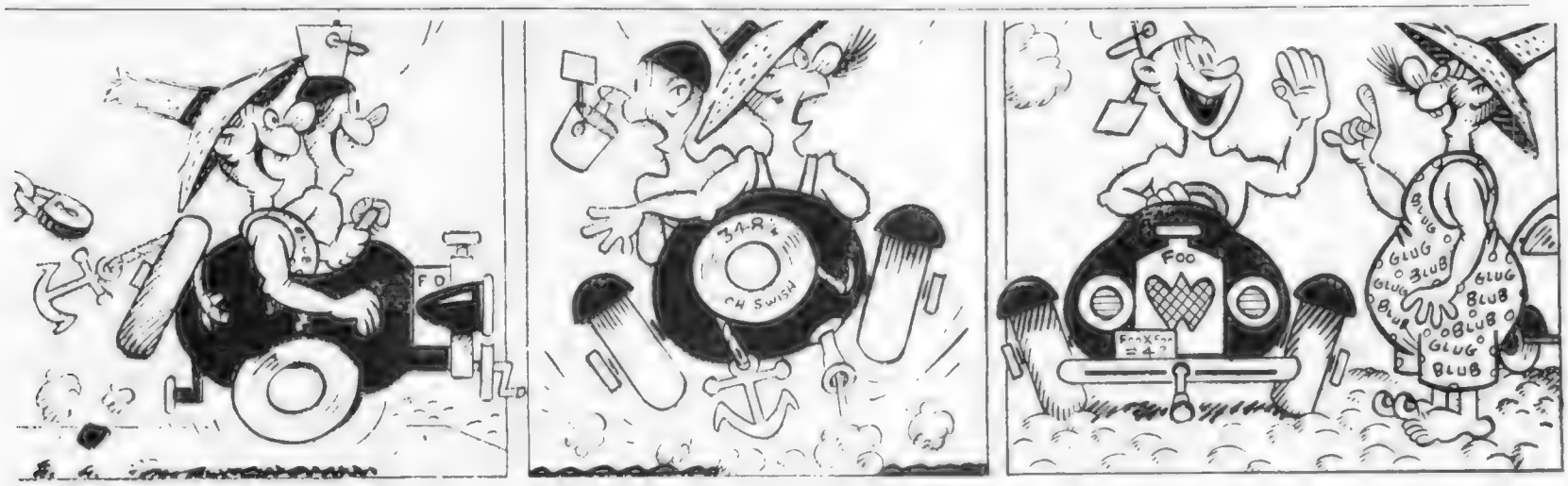
BILL HOLMAN

If you've been planning on getting a new car, have you thought seriously about buying a FOOMOBILE? No, we're not kidding—this famous two-wheel vehicle created by cartoonist Bill Holman in his long-running Sunday comic page, SMOKEY STOVER, has now been brought to life! Peter Schlatter, whose company which makes a line of drain tile accessories and sells ditching machines in Francesville, Indiana, is the lifelong SMOKEY STOVER fan who has already put together two FOOMOBILES with the help of various knowledgeable friends. The car was scheduled to be on exhibit at the Indianapolis Auto Show this past January 1-8, and it will be featured in a Popular Mechanics story. Schlatter intends not only to sell complete cars but the FOOMOBILE will also be available in kit form. As this is being written, Bill Holman is !ooking forward to the arrival of Schlatter and the car in New York, where the famous cartoonist will be photographed with the vehicle for the Popular Mechanics story. First of all, we think you'll enjoy hearing how the car came about from Mr. Schlatter himself. Following that you'll find a conversation we had with BILL HOLMAN about his great cartooning career.

To begin with, here is what Pete Schlatter told us:

When I grew up during the depression, my folks never had enough money to buy the Sunday funnies, so I used to go across the street and read them at a neighbor's house. I've always been a builder, mechanically inclined, and since I was a great SMOKEY STOVER fan from the beginning, Bill's Foomobile intrigued me, and I determined to make that car eventually. This was 40 years ago. But to bring the discussion of this idea up to more recent years, let me say that I have some real good friends in Chicago who are very knowledgeable scientifically and who have been enthusiastic about the car. One man made the bracket that held the camera that took the first pictures on the moon. Another friend is a systems engineer, and both of these men know how to think out a project to its completion. We tried gyros, and everything under the sun, and on frequent trips to Chicago we'd talk about the Foomobile, and discuss what each of us had accomplished since the previous visit. I had 3 different frames built and junked them because I couldn't get them to work. We got a book on gyros (the same principle is involved as in the familiar children's gyroscope top, only we'd need something much bigger and heavier) and I even bought a Norden bombsight to use. But a gyro only works when two forces are pulling against each other and they'd have to be exerted back and forth very quickly in order for the car to have stability. I'd been doing a lot of thinking about the project late last summer because I wanted to have a Foomobile ready to run at our annual Fall Festival here in town. One evening, all of a sudden, the idea came to me that since steel-belted radials run about 1/2 flat, I could solve one of the last remaining problems with the car. I put a caster on the front and back of the car so that in case it fell down, there'd be something to roll on. A week later I read an article about a group of people who were racing bar stools! It seems they'd put little wheels on them, and I said to myself that if they could do that, our car would work! We took the Foomobile off the sawhorses and put it on the floor the day

Alfred (Pete) Schlatter with the FOOMOBILE

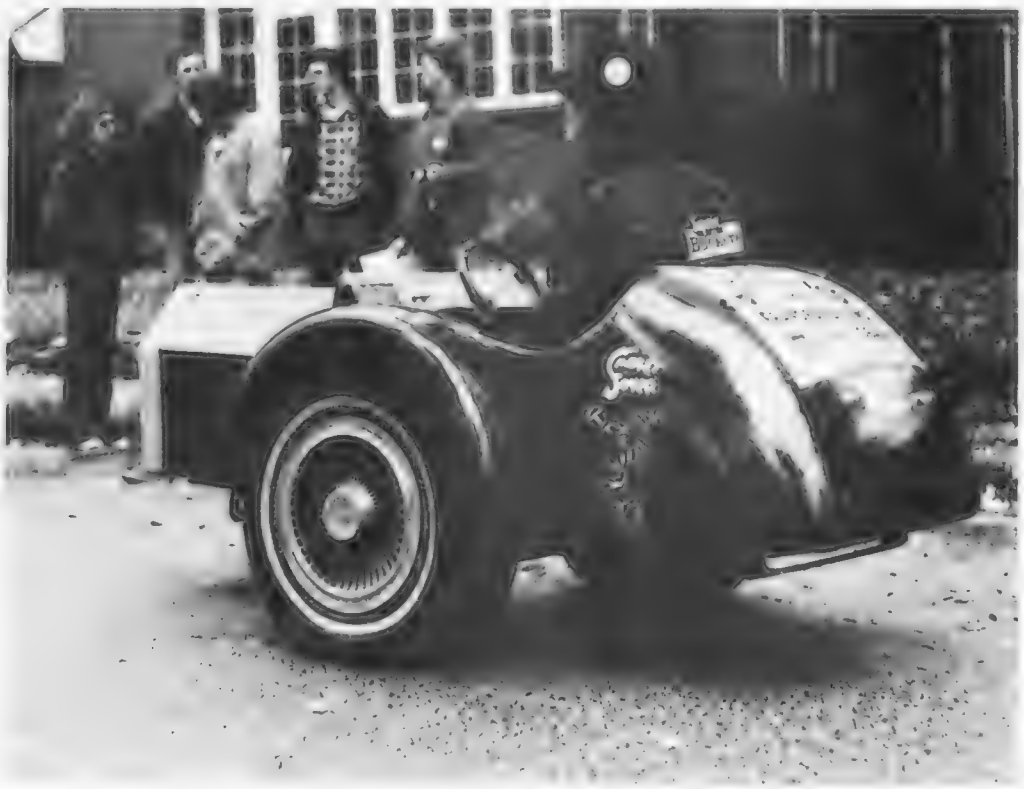


before the Festival, and found that it had so much stability that we could remove the casters. We discovered that we needed a little more horsepower so I put on a smaller pump. But then we had too much power and not enough pump, so we experimented some more. But we made the Festival! Our first car was made from things around the shop and we only had to spend about $50 of outside cash. And it works real well. But at the moment I'm building a second car which I'm planning on taking to New York between Christmas and New Years. Naturally, because it's on two wheels, you can't run at a great speed on the road, so I'll put it on a trailer for the New York trip. I have the frame and all the hydraulics ready, the engine is expected momentarily, and I can put everything together quickly. The car will be a natural for parades and everybody says, "I see it but I still don't believe it!" Finally, you asked me to give you my address for those who are interested in the car. Schlatter's Inc., P.O. Box 548, Francesville, Indiana 47946.

And now to our talk with BILL HOLMAN:

Q: Speaking of the Foomobile, Bill, how did the word 'Foo' get started in Smokey Stover?
A: In a Chinese curio shop in San Francisco I saw a little jade doll with the word 'Foo', meaning 'Good Luck' in Chinese, printed on a plaque attached to the doll. I thought it would be fun to put the word on the front of a car—it would be simple and easy—and you can imagine the mail I've gotten on that over the years!
Q: And we might as well go into the origin of the words 'Notary Sojac' which have intrigued so many of your readers.
A: Well, a guy who conducted a column in the Daily News in New York, got a letter from a reader, asking how you would say 'Merry Christmas' in eleven different languages. The editor spelled the various greetings phonetically, and the one in Gaelic came out sounding like Notary Sojac. I can't give you the actual spelling of the greeting in Gaelic but that's the way it sounded to my ears when I read it. Of course the mail started coming in—people thought it had something to do with a Notary Public, etc.—and I guess the rest is history. This way I've been able to wish my readers 'Merry Christmas' throughout the year.
Q: How about '1506-Nix-Nix?
A: The late Al Posen, who did the "Sweeney & Son" comic strip, was a bachelor living in a hotel room—No. 1506. I began using the phrase—a private joke between the two of us—as a warning to girls to stay away from Al's room.
Q: You were a natural for the cartoon business.
A: Well, I've always been inclined to humor and acting silly. And my father was a funny guy. When I was 8 or 9 I went around with a bunch of kids in my home town, Nappanee, Indiana, and the old man of one of them owned a clothing store. When a clothing season was over, he'd get ready to throw away the white cards which had had samples of various suit materials wrapped around them. So these cards wound up as a cheap bristol board for us kids, and that's how I got interested in drawing pictures. When I was 13 or 14, we moved to Goshen, Indiana. I didn't finish high school but had to get a job, since eating was pretty important. I worked in a drugstore, jerking sodas, and that was big stuff to me since I made $2.50 a week and all I could eat. Summers I was with my grandmother in Crawfordsville. My mother had had a millinery store and later we moved to Chicago where she was in the workroom of a store, while I worked at Marshall Field's wholesale house days and attended The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts nights. One of the kids at the school told me that they were looking for an office boy at the Chicago Tribune and that he was going to apply for the job. My mother wanted me to apply but I didn't want to jump the gun on this kid. However she told me that in business you don't hang back and wait—you go right in there—so I went to the Tribune. The art director asked me if I was the fellow they had scheduled for the job and I told him that I

SMOKEY STOVER
HELP!
HELP!
HELP!
THE PILLOW SLIPPED, THE BED SPREAD AND HE FELL INTO THE SPRING
HOW'D YOU MAKE OUT LAST NIGHT? FEEL BETTER?
OH, DOCTOR, I SPENT A HORRIBLE NIGHT!
SNOOZE PEPPER
TERRIBLE! IT WAS AWFUL!
DIDN'T THE MEDICINE I PRESCRIBED HELP?
NURSING AN OLD GRUDGE
OH, THE MEDICINE CURED MY STOMACHACHE ALL RIGHT!
IT WAS THAT DARNED DILL PICKLE YOU ASKED ME TO TRY TO KEEP ON MY STOMACH!
AFTER YOU TOOK THIS MEDICINE, COULDN'T YOU?
HAVE A BUM KNEE?
OPEN A JOINT ACCOUNT
WELL, YES, I COULD AS LONG AS I COULD STAY AWAKE...
BOIIG-OM
AS FLAIN AS THE DOZE ON YOUR FACE
BUT EVERY TIME I DROPPED OFF TO SLEEP THE BLAMED THING WOULD ROLL OFF!
10-11
SKAT
SPOOKY
ALL ANIMALS MUST BE ON A LEASH
PARK DEPT.
GRR
10-11
SKAT



The FOOMOBILE at the Fall Festival.

BILL HOLMAN and his attractive wife, DOLORES, spend their winters in Forest Hills, N.Y. and their summers out on the eastern part of Long Island. Bill is a past President of the National Cartoonists Society, and with other members of the organization, he has made countless trips to various parts of the world, entertaining the armed forces in camps and hospitals.

The FOO flag which flies outside the Holman summer home on Long Island.

wasn't. But he said, "Well, you got here first so come in tomorrow." I could have kissed everyone in Chicago, I was so happy! I rubbed shoulders with a lot of famous cartoonists from then on. Carl "Harold Teen" Ed was there, as was Harold "Little Orphan Annie" Gray. He worked in a turtleneck sweater, wore a derby, and among other things was working as a legman for an illustrator. Gray went out and dug up illustration work for this guy and then got a percentage of the job. At night Gray was doing layouts. I was the office boy but I did layouts and little comics to amuse myself, and did all the paste-downs of all the stuff in the paper—so photos could be squared up and retouched. This was big stuff to me and I loved it. E.C. Segar was my idol at the time with his "Looping The Loop". Frank King would come in and Sidney Smith was tops with "The Gumps". After a couple of years of this, I left Chicago, and went to Cleveland, hoping to get a job with Scripps Howard (NEA).

Q: How come you left the Tribune?

A: I was such a kid—I hadn't reached the stage of drawing a feature—and frankly I became a little bit frightened by such a big newspaper as the Trib. You had to do a strip, or a Sunday page, or a big feature, in order to hold your own. But I wasn't as frightened by the prospect of NEA in Cleveland and there were a lot of cartoonists there too. Wally Allman was drawing "Doings of the Duffs," Gene Ahern "Our Boarding House" and since NEA seemed to like my stuff, I got the job and all of us cartoonists were in one cubicle together. Chic Young had been working as a stenographer in a railroad office in Chicago, he came to Scripps Howard in Cleveland about the time I did and we roomed together for a while. Merrill "Freckles and his Friends" Blosser and Edgar "Boots and her Buddies" Martin were there also. And I can't forget Jim "Out Our Way" Williams. Incidentally, we cartoonists didn't work at the main NEA production plant but had an office in the same building that housed the famous Landon Correspondence Course of Cartooning—which I had taken. I did "Billville Birds", a daily strip involving characters such as Wally Waddle, Duck Down, etc. After about 3 years, I got fired and headed for New York, where I went to work for the Herald Tribune Syndicate and did a kid feature called 'G-Whizz, Junior". Winsor McCay, Charlie Voight, Clare Briggs and other famous names were there, and, as a punk, I hung out with damn nice people.

Q: What came after that?

A: I started freelancing and things really started opening up. "Judge" was the first magazine in which my cartoons appeared. Jack Shuttleworth was the editor. We cartoonists made the rounds on Mondays, rather than on Wednesdays, as was the case later on. I soon had about 30 markets and made a Hell-of-a-lot of money. I was just being myself in my cartoons—that was the whole thing. I'd had quite a bit of experience at various papers and syndicates, and when you find that your stuff's appearing before the public in a big national publication, you get confidence. You unconsciously open up, forget your inhibitions, and do the things that are the easiest and most normal. You're not uptight any more. I was really amazed that I was selling so much stuff, not only in New York but overseas as well—and sometimes I'd get as many as 60 O.K.s back from England, American Magazine, Redbook, Film Fun, Capt. Billy's Whizbang, Ballyhoo—all of them were good markets in the U.S. After maybe 7 years of such freelancing, Garrett Price, who had been in the art department at the Tribune, told me that the Daily News was looking for a funny Sunday comic.

Q: Is that how "Smokey Stover" came about?

A: Well, the News is very civic-minded—they're always starting Funds for widows of policemen, firemen, etc., and Capt. Patterson, the Publisher of the News, wanted a fireman character—someone that people could identify easily with. Also I had sold a lot of firemen ideas to magazines, and the idea of firemen running around all over in red trucks seemed like a good gimmick to hang things on. I was surprised that no one had done it before. Incidentally, you remember that Jay Irving did the "Pottsy" strip—with policemen characters for the News also. I drew up a page while I was out in Indiana for Christmas, it pleased Patterson, and he wondered if I could keep it up. I told him confidently that I could and the first "Smokey Stover" page appeared on March 10th, 1935. By the way, it ran for nearly 40 years until 1973. It happened that the well-known Gaar Williams died a month later and I inherited most of his papers right at the start. And, in addition to this, as you know, I did the "Nuts and Jolts" daily cartoon panel for about 28 years.

Q: Tell us about your method of getting ideas, Bill.

A: I'd been in the business so long that I always had a backlog of stuff that I'd written down over the years but never used. When I'd be working on a page, I would get ideas that didn't apply to the subject at hand so I'd write them down. And I always made little rough sketches to go with each of these ideas. I didn't put anything on the Strathmore right away but would try material out first on another piece of paper. I got better effects that way and could edit the wordage before starting to draw on the final Strathmore. Lots of times you get an idea but it doesn't seem right to you, so you keep on thinking on that one track until experience tells you that a later version *will* work.

Sometimes I'll look through a magazine at the ads, in the search for an idea. Maybe I'll see an underwear ad with a serious caption. The way my mind works, I'll usually be able to come up with a twist to the caption that will make it funny. This sort of thing happens to me a lot. Sometimes, when people are talking, I don't hear what they're actually saying—I hear what I *wish* they'd said!

Another good source of idea inspiration has been a 25-volume set of the English humor magazine, PUNCH, which Ed (Senator) Ford, the comedian, sold to me. By going through these volumes, I was sometimes able to dredge up stuff that you'd never dream was there. Some very good artist often did a good idea which wasn't handled in my way, but it could be simplified and adapted for SMOKEY.

Q: For the benefit of those eager to get into the cartoon field—what are the necessary ingredients for success?

A: Loving cartooning enough to stick to it and to work at it. Even though you're doing an idea which may be silly, you can't do anything in a haphazard way. My wife, Dolores, sometimes got irritated at me because I was always thinking about my work. I would sit all evening at home, working on material, rather than going to a movie which, to me, was wasting time. I'd rather do this than go out on some guy's boat and fish for two hours because fishing, to me, is repetitious—if you've caught one fish, you've caught 'em all!

As you know, this is the third in a series of conversations about topics of current importance for cartoonists—a series made possible through the cooperation of the NATIONAL CARTOONISTS SOCIETY and CARTOONIST PROfiles magazine. In this case, Burne Hogarth, the NCS President, suggested that GIL KANE, the well-known comic book artist, talk about the situation in a field which he knows so well. Gil also points out some of the differences between comic book features and the features which are offered by newspaper syndicates. Our readers will remember from our story in Issue #35 that Gil is also drawing the new daily and Sunday two-tier 'Star Hawks' feature which is written by Ron Goulart and is being distributed by the Enterprise Features Division of the Newspaper Enterprise Association.

GIL KANE

Q: I know, Gil, that you've said there's been a significant change in comic books. Will you say something about that?

A: I think that the most significant change that has occurred in comic books in 25 years is that the field has moved away from the artists that used to do the work—those who represented by and large the field as it existed—and they now have been displaced in virtually 90% of the situations by new, younger artists. The field is dominated by people with an average age of 23 to 25. Except for a few old dinosaurs such as Jack Kirby and myself, and maybe two or three others, they're all young. In fact we represent such curiosities that there aren't enough of us to even be called a minority. So the business is now being carried forward entirely by these young people—the editors are all about 25, and in fact one of the major publishers is that age. I'm referring to Janette Kahn who's publisher and really editorial director of National Periodical Publications; she shapes the policy of their magazines. I believe that Dick Giordano does some work for them, but he represents an absolutely marginal percent of the people who are over 40 there. So you have to deal with the fact that the writers, the editors, and even the people who work in subordinate editorial positions, are mostly young people.

Primarily they're simply carrying forward what I believe are the established formulas that were imposed on the business by the people who were there before. There is enormous concentration on illustrative art techniques and most of these young guys—who have great facility—are standing on the shoulders of the people who preceded them. Their *starting point* tends to be the point at which a lot of their predecessors *left off* in this field. In other words there is a kind of spitting distance between where they are now and where the generation before them *got to* just before they left the field—*they're good!*

They're carrying forward essentially two or three styles and influences which are somewhat jumbled together. At this point they are expressing their personalities by dipping heavily into these visual approaches. But the thing is that these young people are focusing with great intensity on the art—as I see it, that's the difference between them and the artists of the other generation. I always thought of myself as being intense—and I still think I am—but I *do* work for money. I won't do anything that isn't profitable to me, and I gear my work entirely to the amount I'm paid, since time is money. But they don't! Oh of course they have to have some sort of employment to sustain themselves but they're all going for status as artists. The comic book business now deals with superheroes, and with a kind of superhero romantic fantasy, and, as a result, there is a heavy emotional involvement in the material. The material isn't too cerebral, but it's terribly intense with great focus on drawing facility and an outpouring of emotion is evident.

By the way, some of them have found too little satisfaction in the idea of doing comic book work entirely and they have gone on to deal with the same audience but by means of posters and single illustrations.

Q: I think you've emphasized that there have been *two* very important developments in the comic book field. What's the second one, Gil?

A: Comic book fandom is the most marvelous phenomenon of the last eight or nine years. There are literally a couple of hundred thousand voluble fans and there are at least two or three conventions somewhere every week in the country. The number of comicons totals in the hundreds and often thousands of people appear at them. Even the very smallest ones have several hundred attendants at the very least. And they support the comic book business by buying and trading. I've seen 14 and 15-year-old kids come in to one of these affairs with a wad of 5 or 6 hundred bucks, and watched them wheel and deal. They put a value judgment on these comic art pieces and it's like trading in rare stamps. As a result of this, the entire quality of the field has changed; it's shaping itself to the tastes of these fans. I would say, too, that this phenomenon has caught on with the media. At the beginning, these events were of interest mainly just to those in the comic book business but now the big newspapers and TV pay attention and they really cover these comicons. When 'Star Hawks' strips were sent to papers around the country, I was called by different editors and interviewed over the phone. And the thing that got to me was the fact that most of these editors were familiar with my work, and they were comic book readers. As a result, they brought to their questioning an astuteness which surprised me. In other words they're still familiar with what's going on in comic books, and there's still some sort of involvement on their part. I don't believe that anybody ever expected that to happen with comic books.

Q: There are two distinct features involved in these comicons, aren't there?

A: Yes—one is the fan who's essentially a creative personality himself—either as a writer or as an artist. Even if he never becomes successful professionally, the fact is that the creative impulse is there, and he deals with what he does on a creative level.

Then there's the general reader who is attracted to the material in a less intense, but nevertheless in a very broad way, to these comic book images. Incidentally, I think that the value of comic book pictures has very little to do with the content of the *written* material.

Q: What, in your opinion, is the difference in the appeal of the newspaper strip, and that of the comic book feature?

A: The newspaper strip is the product of contemporary middle-age people and it reflects contemporary middle-age sophisticated humor. Older adults identify with the various problems of their lives and so cartoonists who are in this age group do funny material about adult problems. So they attract an older adult audience which identifies with them.

On the other hand, the young people who are involved with comic books are into a kind of sensory experience, and their lives consist essentially of fantasy involvements—whether they are romantic or otherwise. I don't think this division in appeal is a matter of age. It's just that the adult humor strips in the newspapers deal in very pointed ways with essential problems of real life as most adults live it. But other adults, along with the younger people, are attracted to the comic books by nothing except the fantasy, the romance, the extraordinary imagery of comic book art—*there's simply nothing like it!* comic books have taken the whole sense of excitement and wonder that I used to get from the Sunday comic pages in newspapers—Flash Gordon, Tarzan, etc.—and they've carried these effects over to the comic book pages. Incidentally, none of the popular strips in Europe reflect the influence of newspaper comics anymore. Rather, they reflect American comic books in all their attitudes.

I think that the kind of comic art that young people prefer would not only create variety on newspaper pages but also would bring back vitality.

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'77

There is a kind of sameness to the clutter of little cockroaches, little snails and little round balls talking to one another that you find in humor strips on many newspaper pages. Papers can use many of this type of strip because they take up little space, and they're so bare of detail that it's quite obvious that one is very much like another visually. A newspaper should recognize the fact that if it doesn't appeal to people at every level, it loses its vitality, becomes narrow and parochial and ultimately becomes an entrenched format aimed at the few.

Q: Editors haven't been interested in new story strips in the past few years. I believe they've felt that the public which can see a complete story on TV in an hour, won't sit still for an 8 or 10 week strip continuity. What do you think of this idea?

A: Nonsense! What about TV soap opera with the largest and most loyal following on TV. Individual stories can take years to complete. I don't think there's anything wrong with the idea of a story strip itself, but if some of them have lost their audience, it may be that they're being written in exactly the same style that they were 30 years ago. Perhaps they haven't progressed in the way the humor strips in the newspapers have. You can see in the progression from 'Toots & Casper' to 'B.C.', for instance, the kind of sophistication that has gone through the country. Movies and TV and various media have so enlarged the adult's grasp of what's going on that 'Toots & Casper' could never survive nowadays.

In the same way story strips should be written, I think, so that they relate to adult audiences. The movie, 'Star Wars', is an enormous success not just because it's fantasy—because there are fantasies that fail all the time—but simply it's a fantasy told in today's terms. As romantic as it is, the fantasy is still told in a way that's totally believable to people at every age. I've seen the picture twice and each time I saw it, people got up and applauded the film at the end. And those I've talked to since have all reported the same reaction from audiences.

I'd also like to say something about the idea of a variety of sizes on the comic page in newpapers. I think the 2-tiered 'Star Hawks' that Ron Goulart and I are doing will create a splash of variety and dynamism, and that this will add value to the individual humor strips on the same page. Each new size variation on the comic page would accent the other features. In our case we're transferring an individual comic book page to newspapers and with it, all of the vitality and the thrust that you get on a comic book page because it has the room and because it deals in romance and fantasy which the newspapers abandoned long ago.

Q: Can a young person make a living doing comic book work?

A: Yes, and in this connection I can think of a half-dozen guys in the field who do somewhere between $60,000 and $100,000 every year in comic books. There's an enormous competition between National and Marvel and the prices are the best they've ever been. And over and above everything else, if you happen to have any kind of a following, that adds considerably to your income, because comic book art work is worth an enormous amount of money these days. Incidentally, most comic book publishers regard the art work as the creator's property.

Q: Is the writing of comic book stories being done by the artists themselves these days?

A: More and more this is the case. As these young artists reach for reputations, they also have a need to express themselves totally.

Q: How difficult is it for the young person to get into comic book work?

A: I think that anybody who likes comics and wants to do them can break into the field. The creative impulse is there and then it depends on how singleminded you are about achieving that end. There's no easy way to do it—if you have the impulse and you throw yourself into it, you can do it. You must draw all the time and you have to ultimately evolve a point of view in your work. Then you'll be able to bring in all of the technical things you've learned to support that point of view, and you'll have a springboard that will carry you places. Of course I've known some people who were potentially excellent artists but somehow or other they weren't able to get their intent and their personality together and they've found themselves totally syphoned off by outside activity—by family and personal relationships that keep them away from their work. As a result, they were never able to equal the work of people of lesser abilities who applied themselves. ●

TUMBLEWEEDS®

by T.K. Ryan

The following story is about TOM K. RYAN, the creator of the popular comic strip, TUMBLEWEEDS, which is distributed by the UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE. It was written by CHARLES A WAGNER, the Director of the Peru, Indiana Public Library, after a visit to Ryan's studio.

With more than 375 daily and Sunday papers to its credit, TUMBLEWEEDS was one of the most successful strips in the King Features stable.

Tom K. Ryan, the creator of TUMBLEWEEDS, was born in Anderson, Indiana on June 6, 1926. He has one sister.

After high school, Ryan studied one year in business at Notre Dame and two years in liberal arts at the University of Cincinnati.

Cartooning as a profession did not come to Ryan on a silver platter. The early years were spent in factory work, as a lineman for the phone company, and even in furniture sales. Eventually, a job was obtained with a printing company and from this Ryan was hired into a position with an ad company.

The advertising field was to have a profound effect upon Ryan's career. He would spend ten or twelve years in commercial art with the studio and on his own. In the ad business, cartoons were Ryan's specialty.

During the fifties, he submitted, with no luck, a few gag cartoons to the major markets. Although he was able to sell a limited number of gag panels to various trade magazines, the small pay for this work was not encouraging.

He did, however, freelance editorial and sports cartoons during this period to the Anderson and Muncie, Indiana newspapers.

Ryan's initial attempt to sell a strip to the syndicates was a failure. He describes this attempt entitled "Benny Beans" as a type of humor different from TUMBLEWEEDS. "More corn." "Benny Beans" was sent to all the syndicates with no success, and, to this day, Mr. Ryan is close mouthed about its actual contents and style.

Finally, however, TUMBLEWEEDS was picked up by the Lew Little Syndicate and saw print in late 1965.

The Lew Little Syndicate was a very small affair at that time. Little and his wife traveled across the country selling the feature out of a camper trailer.

TUMBLEWEEDS began publication with only twenty or thirty papers.

Shortly thereafter, the Lew Little Syndicate merged with the Register & Tribune Syndicate, taking TUMBLEWEEDS with it. Within a year, Lew Little was President of the combined syndicate. Again when Little made a switch to King Features, he took TUMBLEWEEDS with him. Little was National Sales Manager with King Features until May 1977.

Then, he made a switch from King, long thought to be the top dog of the syndication field, to United Features. Going with Little to United Features were WEE PALS and TUMBLEWEEDS. The first copyright tag line on TUMBLEWEEDS for United Features was July 4, 1977.

Both Ryan and Little were enthusiastic about the switch.

The strip began with dailies only, not adding a Sunday page until 1968. Over the past twelve years, Ryan has striven to improve the style and characterization of the strip. As an example, the artist points out the feet which have gotten bigger. Other subtle changes have allowed the strip to keep pace with the times.

Ryan feels that his drawing has improved with familiarity. Indeed, he originally found himself adopting a style simply because it was distinctive, not easily confused with the work of other artists. The characters have developed to such an extent that subtle expressions and body language have become important facets of the story line.

With between thirty-five and forty characters to his credit, T.K. Ryan could possibly be con-

ANYTHING EXCITING HAPPEN WHILE I WAS GONE, DEPUTY?
GRIMY GULCH POP. 49
WOW, 'WEEDS! DID IT EVER!
I WASN'T WATCHIN' WHERE I STEPPED, AN' TOTALLED MY YO-YO!
DON'T YA WANNA HEAR THE GORY DETAILS?!
UH, NOT ON AN EMPTY STOMACH
T.K. RYAN

I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT... WE **KNEW** WHERE THE ENEMY CAMP WAS; WE SWOOP DOWN ON IT IN A SURPRISE ATTACK, AND FIND EVERYONE **GONE!**

MAYBE A SENTRY TIPPED 'EM.

MAYBE THERE WAS A LEAK.

MAYBE JUST BAD LUCK.

MEBBE OUR AFTER-SHAVE GOT THERE **BEFORE** WE DID!

T.K. RYAN © 1977 United Feature Syndicate, Inc

10-3

WELCOME TO ANOTHER CLINIC, GUYS, WHEREIN WE DISCUSS HOW TO COPE WITH THOSE ANNOYING GAFFES TO WHICH WE ARE ALL PRONE!...

BOO-BOO CLINIC

...E.G., I NOTE YOU'VE BEEN REFERRING TO A FEMALE DEER AS A **DEER BROAD...**

O-BOO INIC

© 1977 United Feature Syndicate, Inc

SURELY YOU KNOW, GUYS, **DEER CHICK** IS MORE DE RIGUEUR!

BOO-BOO CLINIC

T.K. RYAN

10-4

NOW, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE INTO **PHILATELY...**

BOO-BOO CLINIC

© 1977 United Feature Syndicate, Inc

STAMP COLLECTING DOES **NOT** INCLUDE COLLECTING PONY EXPRESS RIDERS' SCALPS!

WHY NOT?

-BOO NIC

10-5

DON'T THEY MAKE YOUR ALBUM AWFULLY BULKY?

BOO-BOO CLINIC

T.K. RYAN

WHUT CAUSES THUNDER?

THE GREAT THUNDERBIRD FLAPPING ITS WINGS.

10-8

WHUT CAUSES LIGHTNING?

© 1977 United Feature Syndicate, Inc

THE GREAT THUNDERBIRD GETTING ENTANGLED IN HIGH TENSION WIRES.

T.K. RYAN

IN THE INTERESTS OF JUSTICE, I'LL NOW HEAR THE SUMMATIONS FOR THE DEFENSE AND FOR THE PROSECUTION!
JUDGE FRUMP PRESIDING
7-22
I DIDN'T DO IT!
OH YES HE DID!
A RATHER FLIMSY DEFENSE, FELLA
JUDGE FRUMP PRESIDING

GUESS WHO I JUST LOCKED UP, 'WEEDS?— SCUM GROSS AND HIS GANG!...
JAIL
THEY WERE THE FIRST PRISONERS TO BUST OUT OF THE JAIL WHEN IT WAS BUILT 20 YEARS AGO!
JAIL
HOW WHIFFENPOOFY
JAIL
WELCOME ALUMNI

sidered the Charles Dickens of the comic strip. Hildegarde Hamhocker, Lots of Luck, Limpid Lizard, and, of course, Tumbleweeds are among the most popular of the characters.

Embalmer Claude Clay received the singular honor of being voted an honorary member of the Arizona Funeral Directors, Inc. in April 1977.

The western locale in TUMBLEWEEDS was prompted by Ryan's travels and readings of the old west. His interest in the west was really developed about seven years before the strip was published.

Cartooning is not an easy job for Ryan. He works six days a week on the strip, plus occasional evenings. Sundays are done on Monday and Tuesday, leaving four days to complete five dailies.

Jim Davis, a local freelance artist, puts in three to four days a week as Ryan's assistant. Davis inks in the background and details, after Ryan has completed the story figures, lettering, and assigned the background.

This rigorous pace makes it possible to stay five weeks ahead on the dailies and ten weeks on the Sundays, though it allows for few vacations and holidays. Each week a full seven days worth of material is mailed off to United Features.

The newsprint shortage has not left TUMBLEWEEDS unscathed. Unnecessary details have been eliminated. TUMBLEWEEDS has even had to face the problem of being fit into a sixth page Sunday format.

The left fifty percent of the Sunday strip may be discarded without damaging the story integrity. The photostat for the top right hand side is then pasted to the left of the bottom right hand side to form a sixth page single line of panels.

The early commercial art experiences have had a strong influence on Ryan's work technique. Even the studio which is a short drive from his home, Ryan says is a habit he picked up while a commercial artist. Originals are done on the commercial artist's illustration board and the technique of onion skin transfer is used often.

Ryan receives a few letters a week, most of which, he says, are complimentary. These are from both fans and editors. The syndicate keeps in contact by phone.

The popularity of TUMBLEWEEDS has prompted the release of seven paperback cartoon collections by Fawcett Publications. The latest, *Tumbleweeds Round Up,* was just released in June 1977. Also in paperback publishing, Del Carter has authorized a religious book entitled *Good News for Grimly Gulch,* in which TUMBLEWEEDS panels are used to illustrate moral lessons.

For the collector of wealth and discrimination, Del Carter is also responsible for a line of ten TUMBLEWEEDS characters available since January 1977 from Hummel. Del Carter did the original carvings from which the pewter statues are made. The cost is from thirty to forty dollars each.

For the more economy minded collector, Houabeck, a Wisconsin firm, has manufactured and distributed T-shirt iron ons.

When asked if he saw any trends in newspaper comics, he replied that other than the obvious drift to humor, the only clear cut trend he saw was the use of established names. He illustrated his point by citing the use of a famous comedian's name in INSIDE WOODY ALLEN and the Parker and Walker machines which continue to turn out additional features.

Ryan has four children, the youngest of which is still in college. He was nominated for the Reuben in 1970.

Tom K. Ryan says that he will continue to do his best to keep his fans. ●

Art Wood's FAMOUS CARTOON COLLECTION

In Issue #30 we carried a story about ART WOOD and his famous cartoon collection, and we promised that in future issues he would show our readers important selections from his collection and would make appropriate comments about them. The first of these pieces appears herewith. Art, as most of you know, has been the editorial cartoonist for several large-circulation daily newspapers, and is a Past-President of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists. These days he is Director of Member Information for the United States Independent Telephone Assn. in Washington, D.C.

To me, one of the greatest pen and ink artists of all times is Heinrich Kley, the fantastic German draftsman. I first became familiar with his work through a Hungarian friend of my father's who had an enlargement of one of his factory drawings framed in the living room of his apartment. It was the first thing you saw on entering the room and the last you remembered on leaving. I was hooked on Kley.

Later I discovered Walt Disney was a great Kley fan and had based segments of Fantasia on Kley's drawings of dancing elephants. To my knowledge, except for artist Walt Partymiller, Disney was one of the few to own Kley originals which he acquired prior to World War II.

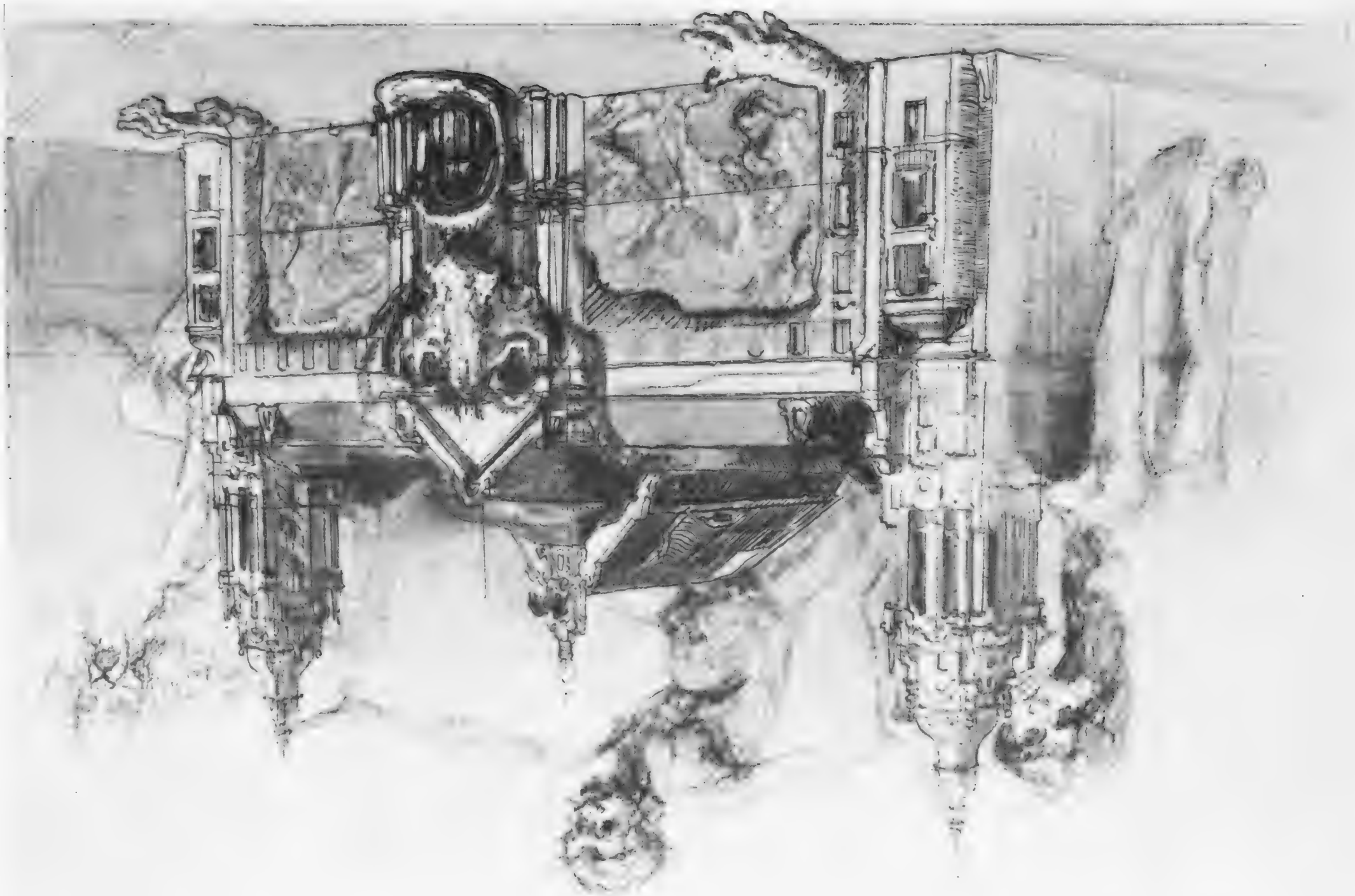
When Ed Marcus, cartoonist of the *New York Times*, died he left me his photograph collection, acquired over 50 years at the newspaper. He also left me his book collection which included the original, full page Kley books in German. Today they are thin from pouring and paging through the folios.

Through a stroke of good luck, I met a Kley fanatic on the west coast who had acquired a collection of the artist's pen and ink color drawings and sketch book pages from Mrs. Kley. According to this collector, Kley's widow later sent the bulk of his work to the U.S. for exhibit and sale. The freighter transporting the drawings was sunk by the Germans during World War II in the North Atlantic, destroying a lifetime of original work. So, these remaining drawings were the only extant Kley originals except for some in the artist's home town of Karlsruhe, Germany.

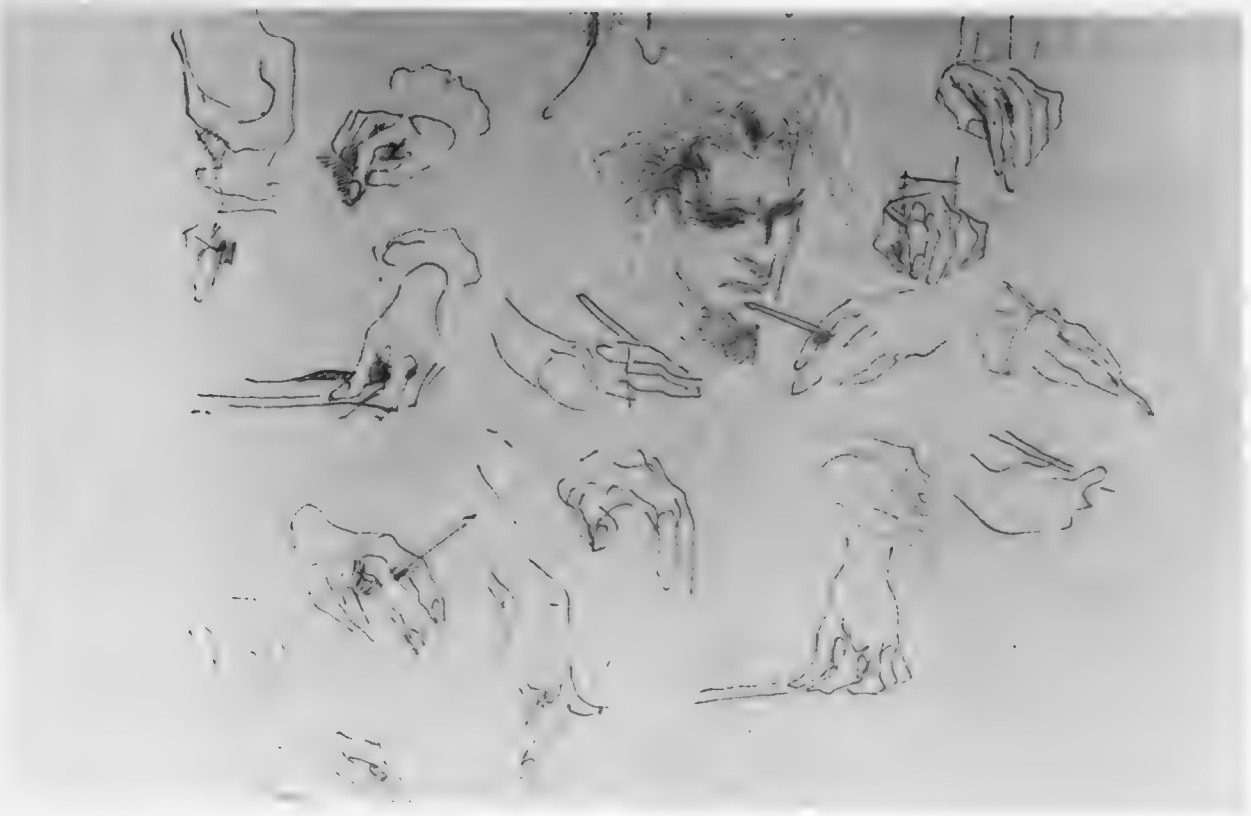
I acquired the entire collection—27 original pen and inks and water colors—last year. A number of the large pages from his sketch book are covered on both sides with pen and ink figure drawings.

Kley was born in 1863. By the turn of the century he was engaged in depicting scenes of his native area—factories, blast furnaces and machinery. These drawings which he often did for pleasure but sometimes for profit, were widely published. He later worked for the noted German magazines *Jugend* and *Simplizissimus* decorating their pages with his free flowing pen lines. Kley was a master at drawing figures in action, especially animals and hideous creatures from his vivid imagination.

Kley spent most of his life in the Munich area where he died in 1945, having contributed his masterful and fanciful drawings for a half century with force and good humor.



Kley



ED REED

Happiness for Ed Reed is his perfect country garden in the heart of the Cotswold country, which he shares with his wife, Mary-Anne. The earliest part of the house is dated 1690.

Our regular correspondent Keith Mackenzie, the Art Editor of the London Daily Mail, had the pleasure recently of spending an afternoon with ED REED, who has been producing the very funny panel, OFF THE RECORD, for many years. Ed started living in Europe most of the time, beginning in 1949. At first he would stay five months a year in Italy, go up to England in the summer, and then come back to the U.S. Then in 1961 he settled down for good in England in the Cotswold country. Along with some recent OFF THE RECORD panels, which Jane Croll, the Editor and Promotion Director of The Register and Tribune Syndicate, has sent us, we're reproducing here some photos of Ed taken by Keith Mackenzie.

"Bob, it's a sort of minor victory over the budget. I'm using PINK INK."

"Eighty dollars more? I wish you people would learn to live within my income."

AT HOME WITH THE ROYALS: Ed Reed in the sunshine with his two King Charles Cavalier Spaniels—"BENEDICT" & "BEDE."

OFF THE RECORD **By Ed Reed**

"If you prefer a firmer mattress, you can always add ice cubes!"

OFF THE RECORD **By Ed Reed**

"Suddenly, I realized I hadn't heard a 'yes, Dear' all evening."

SAID & DUNN

Our 'Said & Dunn' columnist, BOB DUNN, whose King Features "They'll Do It Every Time" cartoon appears around the world in nearly 500 newspapers.

by Bob Dunn

The recent Bert Lance rhubarb focused the public's attention on the universal subject of bank loans. The Senators kept trying to bring out that only very special, influential people got loans as easily as Lance did. The Senators, it was plain to see, were of the commonly held notion that banks are strictly business—heartless, is what I'm trying to say. I knew all the put-downs leveled at bankers—"They'll only give you a loan if you don't need it." "Hi, banker Brown, have you foreclosed on any widows and orphans lately?"

Which brings me to a tale which for me changed the cold banker image many years before Chase Manhattan tried to do it with the public relations campaign, "You have a friend at—". It's about great cartoonist, painter, and architectural artist Harry Devlin. Harry won World War II in the Navy and was mustered out a lieutenant in 1946, got married to his lovely Wendy, and found their dream house in Mountainside, N.J., taking just a little longer naturally, than it does to record the events here.

A word about the bride, beautiful, talented, gracious Mrs. D. It's always interesting how partners met. Pierre and Mamie Curie, Burns and Allen; Jack Farr and all of his wives. Farr was a cartoonist with a unique style. He drew big city scenes. Skyscrapers with hundreds of windows in the background. Bugs Baer said Farr only married gals who could draw windows.

Harry and Wendy met in an art class at Syracuse University. They were both excellent artists and appreciated one another's ability. Wendy, today, is one of the very best portrait artists in the world.Harry's editorial cartoons for Colliers made him tops in his art dimension. They collaborated on a very successful cartoon strip "Raggmopp"; teamed up in writing and illustrating books and magazine articles; served on the New Jersey Art Commission and had seven wonderful children. The Irish name 'Devlin,' plus the seven kids, makes everybody think they're Catholic. Not so—it just happens they're Protestant and Prolific.

But back to the bank story. In the Oscar-winning movie "Best Years of Our Lives," Frederic March played a bank official who had empathy with returning World War II veterans and tried to make it fairly easy for them to take out loans. He was stymied by his fellow bank officials.

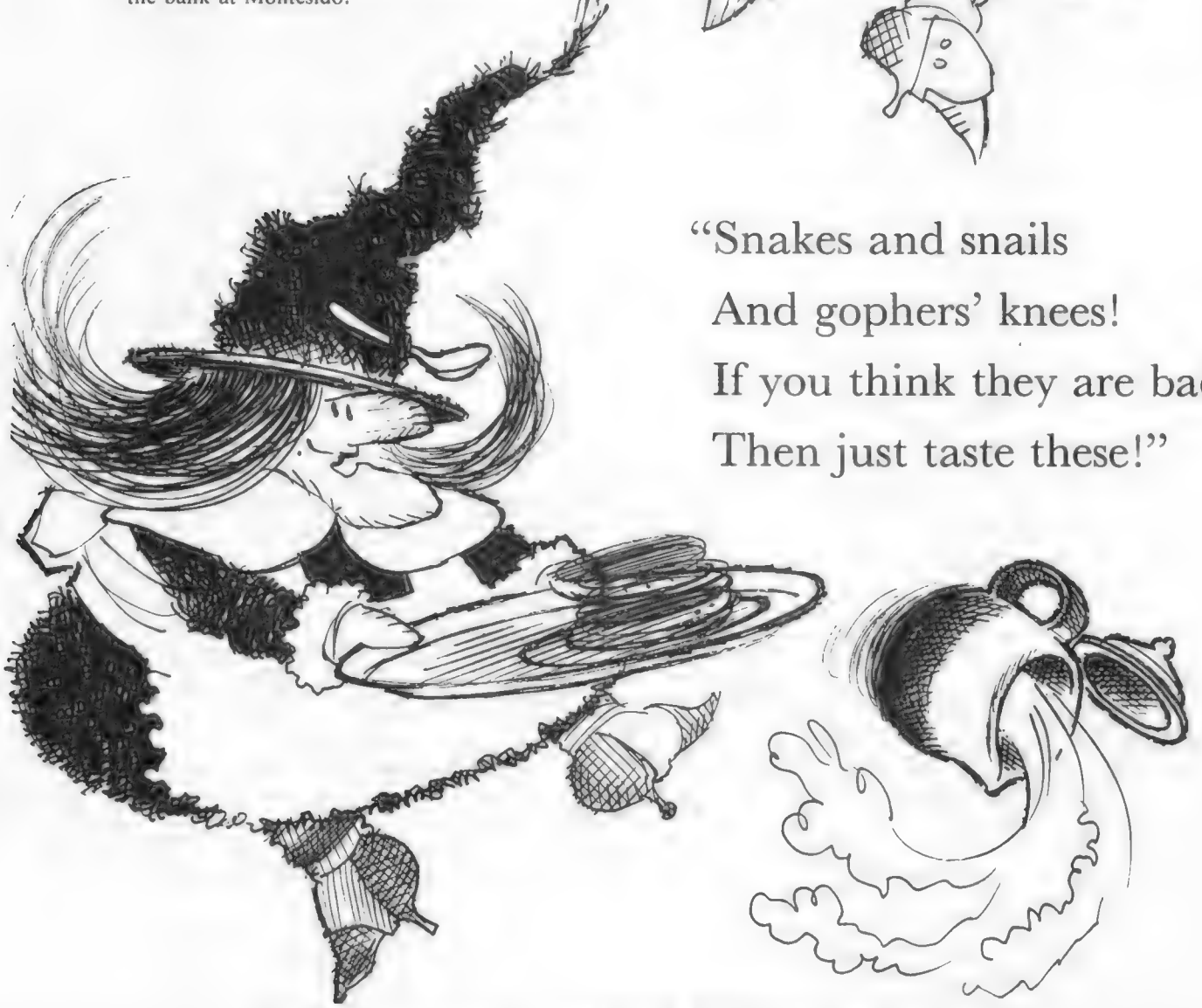
When our real life hero, Devlin, sought a loan to buy the Mountainside property, he went to the City Federal Savings Bank in Elizabeth, N.J. He was carrying his portfolio of cartoons and paintings which he was going to show to editors inNew York later in the day. The bank loan officer listened to Harry's story. When the matter of the mortgage loan had been stated, the banker asked if the applicant was employed. The answer was "No." Then came the all-important question: "What about collateral?"

Portrait by Wende Devlin

Harry told the financier he had no property to put up—no stocks, no bonds, none of the usual security. But wait—he did have something. Harry opened his portfolio and showed his art samples to the strictly businessman. The banker was very impressed by the young man's talent. He pored over each piece of work. But his was not a one-man operation. A committee had to pass on all deals. The official asked a quorum of other loan officers to the conference room where the Devlin drawings were laid out on the table. To the bankers' credit, they liked what they saw. This was a red-letter day in the business. Harry and Wendy got their mortgage loan.

The Devlin decision was not a planned public relations ploy, unlike the campaign invented by publicist Ivy Lee to humanize old John D. Rockefeller in the early 1920s, by having the oil tycoon give out shiny dimes as souvenirs. For the record, the far-sighted, friendly banker was Gilbert Roessner, today the most celebrated financier in New Jersey. The little Elizabeth bank that made it possible for the Devlin castle to becomea reality was doing something right—today it has 67 branches!

And Harry and Wendy are on their way to having that many grandchildren to ride the burros that rule the barn that bears the name of Burro Hall. The world of art, the State of New Jersey and The National Cartoonists Society can point with pride to Devlin, the man who woke the bank at Montesido.



"Snakes and snails
And gophers' knees!
If you think they are bad,
Then just taste these!"

'Old Black Witch' drawings ©Wende & Harry Devlin

Fogarty portrait of Evelyn Nesbit Thaw.

Frank, "Holy Pictures" Fogarty is 90 years old and he's the most active member in NCS. Since 1946 Frank has missed only one meeting of the almost 360 get-togethers held by the funny-paper fellas. And he missed that one meeting at age 82 because of being under the weather after competing in the Boston Marathon—or something like that.

I gave Frank the nickname "Holy Pictures" because the scroll work he draws in his very special designs looks so much like stained glass windows. His fellow cartooners gave a birthday party for faithful Frank on Sunday, September 18th at Costello's in New York, the Irish saloon made fittingly famous by James Thurber's decorated walls. Frank was toasted by his peers and their ladies. The guest-of-honor's table was graced by the great Rube Goldberg's widow, Irma.

On the following Saturday at the Elk's Club in Manhasset, the Fogarty children—son and daughters, presented Chapter 2 of the birthday bash and a great time was had by 90 old friends, but most of all by Francis Aloysius Fogarty, the Man of the Hour. What do you know about this gentle nonagenarian? I'll tell you.

Frank was born on the east side of little old New York in 1887. Fourteenth Street was way uptown that year. The east side spawned all sorts of kids, Eddie Cantor, Irving Berlin, Al Smith, and such early delinquents as Monk Eastman, Gyp the Blood, Lefty Louie, Dago Frank, Whitey Lewis and a lot of others whose way of life brought them to the death house at Sing Sing. Young Fogarty, like every cartoonist-to-be, drew in his schoolbooks. As he was coming into his teens, Outcault's "Yellow Kid" was the sensation of the newspaper business. Little Frankie knew what he wanted to be.

At age 13, short pants buttoned *below* the knee as a sign of maturity, Frankie, with some sample drawings under his arm, bearded the toughest editor in New York, and applied for a job to Charles Chapin of the World. It was Chapin who had such a mean disposition that it inspired Irvin S. Cobb's famous quip when he heard Chapin was out sick—"I hope it's nothing trivial!" That was the guy it was Kid Fogarty's luck to approach, hoping for a civil reception. Chapin was grist for the psychiatric mill way before that branch of medicine was with-couch.

A few years after Fogarty's meeting with him, Chapin, after a sensational trial, was sent to Sing Sing. He had murdered his wife in one of his endless fits of rage. Oddly enough, he seemed to find peace in prison. He eventually become a gardener inside the gray walls and became known internationally for his horticultural advancements.

That day at the World, when Fearless Fogarty attempted to show his samples, the young boy's clean, open-faced look must have forestalled the crusty editor's usual irascibility. He couldn't

JABEZ WHITE.

JOE GANS, THE OLD MASTER.

FRENCHMEN PLOD ALONG IN LEAD

Bob Hallen Wins Five-Mile Race and Coleman Gets the Mile Walk.

SCORE AT THE 97TH HOUR.

	Miles.	Laps.
Cibot and Orphee.....	539	2
Davis and Metkus.....	520	8
Dineen and Prouty.....	501	3
Loeslein and Klubertanz..	489	9
Corey and Hegelman.....	478	7
Feegan and Curtis.....	472	0
Shelton and Frazer.....	464	8
Guignard and Rovere.....	438	7
Navez and Kellar.....	424	9
Edelson and Pallanti.....	395	1
Hartley, running alone...	331	3

With only ten teams of the original twenty-seven left in the six-day go-as-you-please race at Madison Square Garden, Cibot and Orphee, the French pair, still hold the big lead. During the day the Frenchmen increased their lead and are now nineteen miles in front, with Davis and Metkus second and Dineen and Prouty third.

Feegan and Curtis, the Irish team, who showed to advantage on the second day of the race and took third place from Dineen and Prouty, are now far behind the Bostonians. Their sprint of Monday apparently took the starch out of the

help but see the lad's samples which Frank was wise enough to have at the ready. Chapin didn't bite the kid's head off. He just said, "No opening—come back when you grow up." Young Fogarty grew up overnight. He acquired a pair of long pants, practiced getting used to them for a while (donning 'longies' was a traumatic experience in those days, as I can testify), and wore them the next day for his second assault on the World.

Chapin remembered him and must have liked the kid's perseverance. He was hired. The Art Editor advised the boy to go to a good art school. Four of the World editors who thought he had talent did an unprecedented thing. When they got to know him, they chipped in to pay for his art courses for the first year. Frank worked on the morning World (at night) and held down a second job on the Sunday World. He drew everything—comics, sports cartoons, editorial cartoons, and decorated the magazine and rotogravure editions.

Suddenly the youthful artist was made art director of the midnight to 7 A.M. shift and life couldn't have been sweeter. No matter that it was a one-man operation. He was doing a job he liked.

Frank was hired as art director for Selznick Motion Pictures. But his heart was in the newspaper business. He drew a sports strip for the old N.Y. Herald and a weekly sport review cartoon for the American Press Association. He drew special assignments for The Morning Telegraph and was put under contract by The New York Tribune to draw editorial cartoons.

The legendary Bill Johnson started a syndicate—Johnson Features. Frank Fogarty and Charley Voight, a great pen-and-ink man who drew "Lester De Pester," were the stars of the new combine. To the Johnson Syndicate goes the credit for bringing out "Skippy" by Percy Crosby, and everything looked rosy until fate and a horse reared up. Mrs. Charles Carey Rumsey, who owned the syndicate was thrown while horseback riding and killed. The syndicate was sold piecemeal. Skippy was taken over by King Features. Fogarty had his job with the Tribune and continued "Mr. & Mrs.," the

The engraver played Fogarty a dirty trick with this sports page spread.

PART TWO. NEW YORK HERALD. MO

BASEBALL ❁ ATHLETIC GAMES ❁ RA

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF

WHAT'S THE USE OF MANAGIN' A SUM TEAM, WHEN YA PIN DO SUMPTIN USEFUL!
ST. LOUIS BROWNS E.B. CUB.
MANAGER FIELDER JONES QUIT THE BROWNS
IS THAT ALL? I MUST SAY IT'S QUITE REASONABLE
THESE GOLF BALLS WILL COST YOU GENTLEMEN $11.000 -
FOUR GOLF BALLS SOLD FOR $11.000 THE OTHER DAY FOR THE RED CROSS GOSH! BUT GOLF IS GETTING EXPENSIVE WHEN WE HAVE TO WORK ALMOST A WEEK FOR $11.000
THROW ME A HUN, 'TILL I KNOCK THE COVER OFF'N HIM!
BEN-JAMIN KAUFF WILL JOIN THE ARMY THIS MONTH
NATIONAL LEAGUE LADDER
KAMERAD!
DOWN!
CASEY, DADMUH, ENRIGHT AND MURRAY, HARVARD FOOTBALL STARS ARE NOW ENSIGNS IN THE NAVY—

YANKEES DEFEAT TIGERS AGAIN

£ Run by Pipp Gives Them 5

BIG LEAGUE RESULTS FOR LAST WEEK

The week's record in each league of games played, won and lost, with runs, hits, errors, men left on bases and runs scored by opponents, including the games of Saturday, June

GIANTS PRIMED FOR NEW START

Champions Turn to Eastern Clubs

RESU

NATIONAL

Yester

No games pla

the East

Standing of

Briggs feature, after Briggs died. Forthright Fogarty started the Sunday page "Clarence" for which he was best known at the peak of the roaring twenties, and drew it for twenty years.

In 1930 Frank was hitting it big in more ways than one. A theatrical column of the time said, "There's something new on Broadway—a cartoon 161 feet wide and 44 feet high by Frank Fogarty about Al Jolson's new movie, "Big Boy." It was the biggest billboard ever—atop N.Y.'s Winter Garden Theater.

That was the year I met Frank. I had a job in Wall Street which I detested. I used to draw caricatures of the brokers and customers of Samuel Ungerleider & Co., draw cartoon strips at night, and try to sell them by mail. One of the customers' men (stock salesmen also known as account executives or body snatchers) was a friendly man named Ezra Leavitt who mentioned he knew a working cartoonist named Fogarty. "Would you like to meet him?" "Wow! Would I!" And so it was arranged as they used to say in the Rover Boy books. I took my samples to the Fogarty newspaper office on West 41st Street in Times Square. I was greeted by a pleasant man who was inking a 'Clarence' Sunday page. I remember I had cartoon strips, caricatures (Bert Lahr, Ted Healy, Harry Richman, etc.) and pen-and-ink portraits. One that I thought was particularly good was of Frances Wiliams, a beautiful blonde singing comedienne of George White's Scandals. Mr. Fogarty didn't say anything as he glanced through the samples. He went back and took out Frances Williams' portrait and gave it a long look. Then he spoke: "You don't draw ears very good."

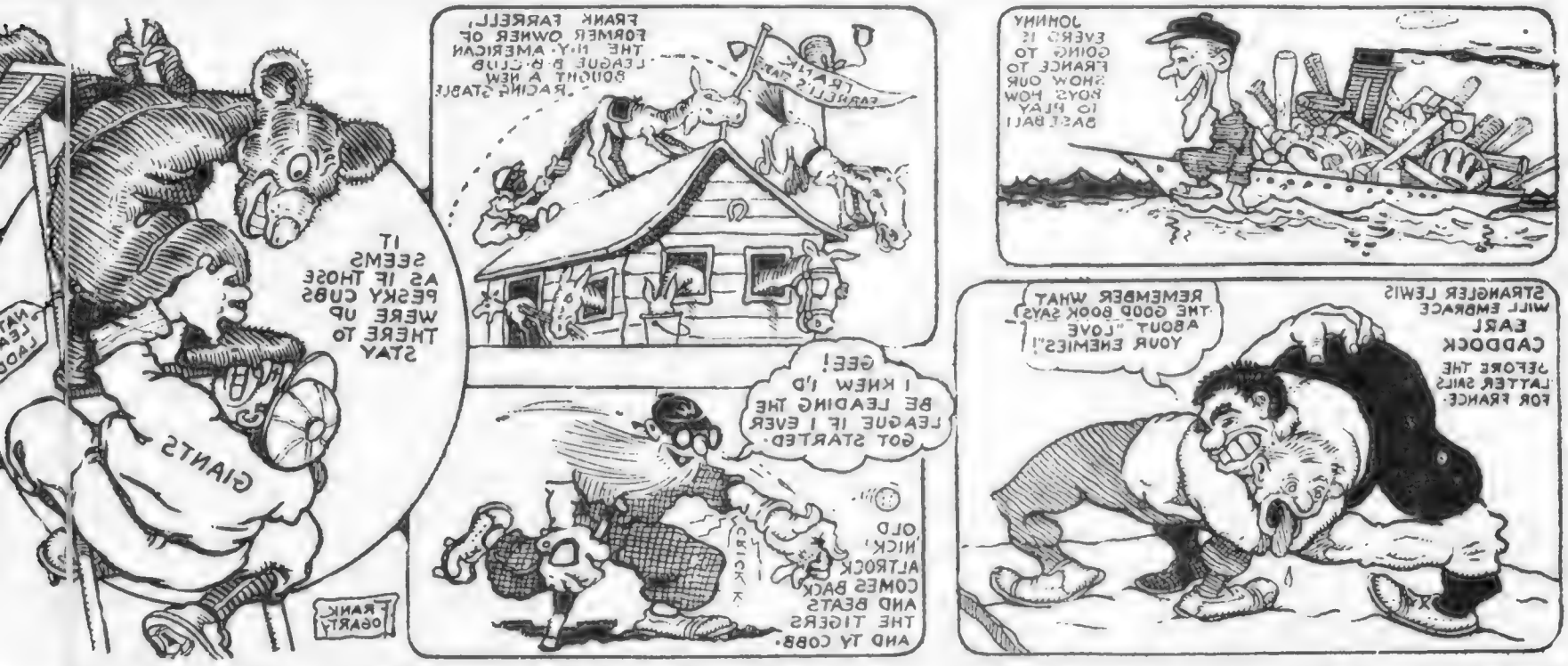
Frank Fogarty gave me a lot of his time. Showed me how to improve my drawing and gently told me I needed art school if I was serious about the cartoon-illustration field. Because he was kind to me that day, I made up my mind I'd try to help any kid who came to me to try and get going.

A good man is 'Holy Pictures Fogarty,' father of a fine family, a big-league cartoonist who is forever young. The second leg of cartoondom's relay team, he is the link between "The Yellow Kid" and today's "Peanuts."

Nicely run, Frank. ●

RACING ❁ LAWN TENNIS ❁ YACHTING

OF A BUSY SPORTING WEEK ✻ ✻ ✻


GIANTS
IT SEEMS AS IF THOSE PESKY CUBS WERE UP THERE TO STAY
FRANK FARRELL, FORMER OWNER OF THE N.Y. AMERICAN LEAGUE B.B. CLUB BOUGHT A NEW RACING STABLE
GEE! I KNEW I'D BE LEADING THE LEAGUE IF I EVER GOT STARTED.
OLD 'NICK' ALTROCK COMES BACK AND BEATS THE TIGERS AND TY COBB.
JOHNNY IS EVERS GOING TO FRANCE TO SHOW OUR BOYS HOW TO PLAY BASE BALL!
REMEMBER WHAT THE GOOD BOOK SAYS? ABOUT "LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"!
STRANGLER LEWIS WILL EMBRACE EARL CADDOCK BEFORE THE LATTER SAILS FOR FRANCE.

RESULTS IN MAJOR LEAGUES.

NATIONAL LEAGUE.

Yesterday's Scores.

[illegible] all clubs being in New York, 5; Detroit, 2.
Chicago, 3; Washington, 0
Cleveland, 1; Philadelphia, 2.

Standing of the Clubs.

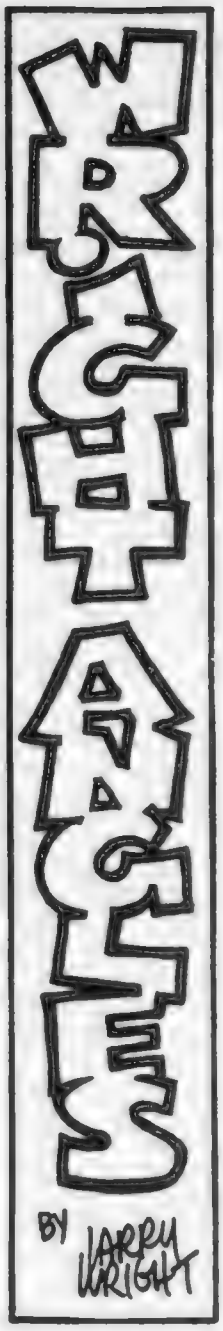
AMERICAN LEAGUE.

Yesterday's Scores.

Standing of the Clubs.

CHOICES EXTENDED SECONDS SEPARATE IN TENNIS TOURNEY YACHTS AT FINISH

Frederick G. Anderson and Charles Sailed by Owners, the Hydra Leads



Larry Wright

Stephen Ford who wrote this story about Larry Wright for CARTOONIST PROfiles, was an NEA editor for two years, January 1974 to August 1976. Prior to working at NEA, he was an editor at The Register-News, Suburban News Group of South Jersey and the Courier-Post, all located in New Jersey.

Ford created and wrote the weekly column "Sounds" distributed by Newspaper Enterprise Association.

Ford has frequently written record reviews and interviews for magazines including "Listen," "Metropolitan," "Philadelphia After Dark," "Cosmo politan" and "Nuance," a tabloid specializing in entertainment. Entertainers he has interviewed include Eric Clapton, George Carlin, Roy Clark, Ronnie Wood, Bill Wyman, Buddy Rich and Diana Trask.

He was a judge for the first Rock Music Awards. The Awards were presented live from the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium on August 9, 1975 from 10:00 to 11:30 pm over the CBS television network.

His interest in music began in childhood and during his high school years he played piano in a local rock group in Cherry Hill, N.J.

The charm of Larry Wright's daily comic strip "Wright Angles," goes far beyond the simple detail of his expressive characters; the topical humor and everyday dialogue are equally responsible for its refreshing style.

Wright, a staff cartoonist for The Detroit News, and nationally syndicated by Newspaper Enterprise Association, attributes his irreverent approach to what he calls "the smartass school of cartooning."

Though Wright has always been around newspapers most of his 37 years and cites Walt Kelly as the cartoonist he most admires, his inspiration actually comes from observing life in suburbia with his wife and two children and "Motley," the family cat which he describes as "a big, furry ball of nastiness."

Of the many characters that weave in and out of Wright's four-panel tales of coping in contemporary America, by far the most popular is Motley.

But Wright is reluctant to take credit for creating the sly mind and behavior of this devious feline. "Usually I just draw whatever the real Motley did at home. There's very little exaggeration. I think most people who own cats find a little of Motley in their own pets. That's probably why he's the most-mentioned in letters from various readers."

And Motley's popularity is ever growing. Fans often send Wright letters addressed to Motley requesting his picture and Wright has had wallet-sized drawings of the cat printed which he sends to readers requesting them. There are even T-shirts available sporting the bewhiskered protagonist's visage.

Though Wright says he's been interested in cartooning for as long as he can remember, including a brief stint as an illustrator for his high school newspaper, he had few opportunities in the past to seriously pursue his passion. "In fact, I didn't even have any formal training in cartooning except for a correspondence course I enrolled in while in the Army. But then I was transferred to Okinawa and couldn't afford the postage anymore."

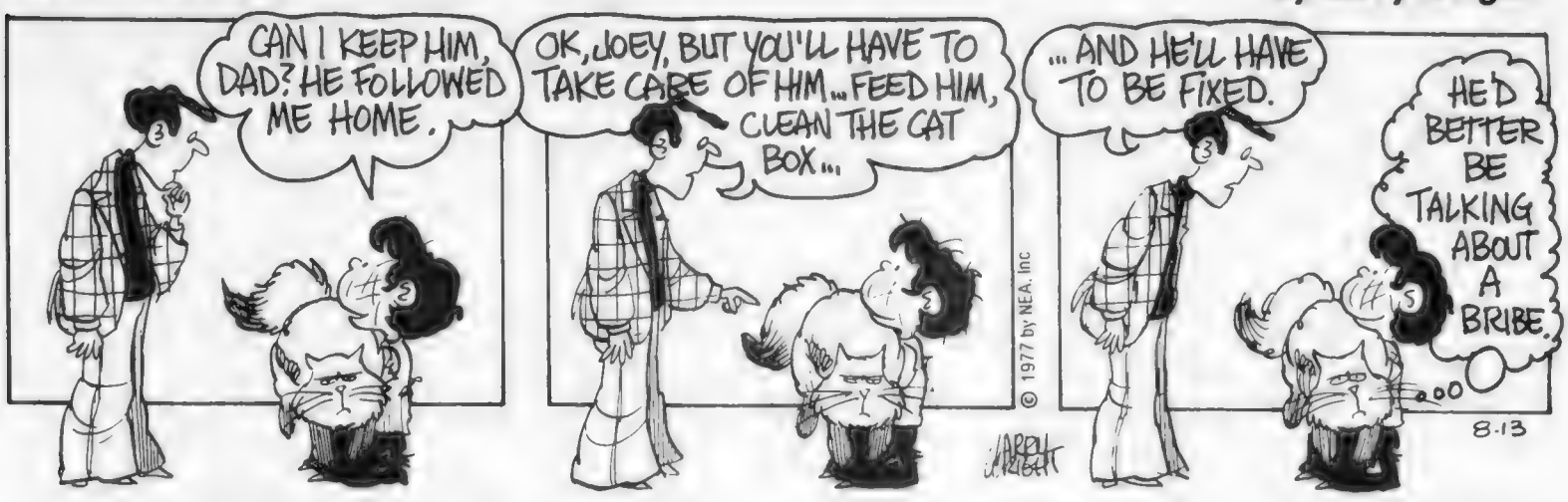
While stationed there from 1959 to 1961 as a civilian Chinese linguist, Wright took a part-time job as cartoonist and then editor for the only English-language paper on the island. His interest in the fourth estate extended far back into childhood when his father was an editor at the Detroit Times. His older brother is a news editor for Automotive News published in Detroit.

Wright began experimenting with a cartoon strip on the editorial page of the Okinawa paper, a sideline he didn't think would lead to much until readers' demands proved otherwise. By the time he was married there in 1962, he was penning daily strips depicting military and civilian life on the U.S. protectorate. The strip blossomed into a graphic commentary until later that year when a spoof of the U.S. tractor sale to Cuba raised objections from his immediate superior officer.

"He told me I would have to give up the part-time job and I thought that was the end of my career as a cartoonist. Then, I discovered my superior's superior was a fan and told me I could continue," Wright explains. (It was not his first scrape with censors. As a budding cartoonist years before in high school, he had penned several strips satirizing the school's juvenile

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

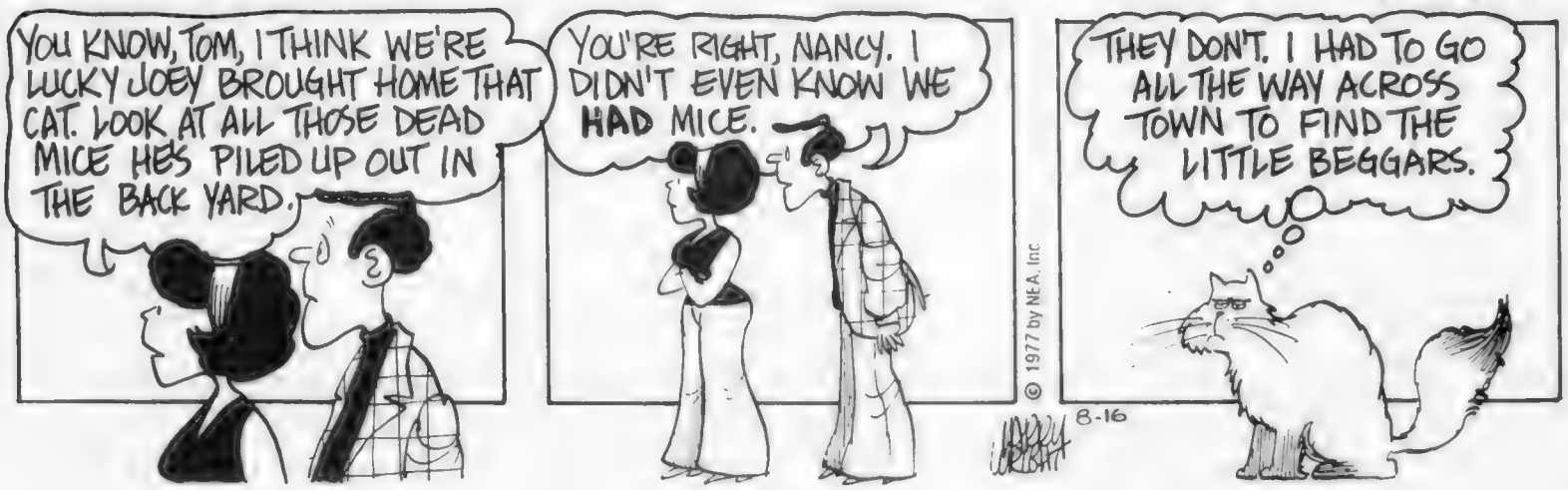
WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**


CAN I KEEP HIM, DAD? HE FOLLOWED ME HOME.
OK, JOEY, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF HIM... FEED HIM, CLEAN THE CAT BOX...
© 1977 by NEA, Inc
... AND HE'LL HAVE TO BE FIXED.
HE'D BETTER BE TALKING ABOUT A BRIBE.
8-13

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER LIVED INDOORS...
WHEN THAT LITTLE KID DRAGGED ME HOME I WAS LIVING IN THE PARK WHERE I'D BEEN DUMPED...
IT'S ALWAYS TOUGH WHEN YOU MOVE TO A NEW PLACE TO GET USED TO WHERE THINGS ARE...
© 1977 by NEA, Inc.
I WONDER WHERE THEY KEEP THEIR RATS?
8-15

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**


YOU KNOW, TOM, I THINK WE'RE LUCKY JOEY BROUGHT HOME THAT CAT. LOOK AT ALL THOSE DEAD MICE HE'S PILED UP OUT IN THE BACK YARD.
YOU'RE RIGHT, NANCY. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD MICE.
© 1977 by NEA, Inc
THEY DON'T. I HAD TO GO ALL THE WAY ACROSS TOWN TO FIND THE LITTLE BEGGARS.
8-16

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

I'LL BE READY IN A MINUTE, TOM. I CAN'T FIND MY BOOTS.
© 1977 by NEA, Inc.
NO! DON'T LOOK IN THERE!
MAYBE THEY'RE IN THE CLOSET...
9-19
ARE YOU BUYING LOTTERY TICKETS AGAIN?

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

KANE, I LEFT MY PIPE IN YOUR OFFICE! BRING IT HERE!
AND GET ME THAT BIG BOWL I KEEP MY TOBACCO IN!
IF HE CALLS FOR HIS FIDDLERS THREE I'LL QUIT.
© 1977 by NEA, inc
9-23

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

OUR PASTOR SAYS WE'RE EXPERIENCING A MORAL DECLINE BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE GETTING LAZY ABOUT THEIR RELIGION.
I AGREE, JOEY. BUT I COME FROM A VERY RELIGIOUS FAMILY.
EVERY SUNDAY MORNING MY FATHER PUTS IN A CONFERENCE CALL TO DIAL-A-PRAYER.
© 1977 by NEA, Inc.

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

I'VE GOT A TOOTHACHE, DR. BUMGUMS.
LET ME TAKE A LOOK, MR. KANE. OPEN WIDE...
OH YES... IT LOOKS GOOD, REALLY GOOD... WONDERFUL, BEST I'VE EVER SEEN....
WOW, THAT'S A RELIEF.
WONDERFUL FOR ME, NOT YOU. YOU'VE GOT REALLY ROTTEN TEETH.
© 1977 by NEA, Inc

DAD, WHY DID WE HAVE TO TAKE MY NEW CAT TO THE VET AND HAVE HIM FIXED?
IT'S TO HELP KEEP DOWN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD CAT POPULATION.
ALSO, MALE CATS THAT HAVE BEEN FIXED ARE LESS LIKELY TO RUN AWAY. THEY TEND TO STAY AROUND THE HOUSE.
THAT'S BECAUSE WE'RE TOO EMBARRASSED TO GO ANYWHERE.
© 1977 by NEA, Inc
8-17

WRIGHT ANGLES **by Larry Wright**

HI, JUDY. THIS IS MY NEW CAT.
REALLY? THIS IS MY CAT. HER NAME IS MISSY.
MY CAT'S A BOY. WE NAMED HIM MOTLEY.
MISSY HAD KITTENS A FEW WEEKS AGO.
WE HAD MOTLEY FIXED.
THE KID'S GOT A BIG MOUTH!
© 1977 by NEA, Inc
8-18

delinquent population. An outraged board of education demanded his ouster from the paper's staff and the editor complied.)

Following his military discharge, he remained in Okinawa for another six months before returning to the Detroit area with his wife and two children.

He immediately set out for a job as an illustrator and immediately encountered the same problems most unknowns do. Dozens of interviews ended with potential employers indicating interest in Wright's work but no offers. "I even had an interview with William Randolph Hearst II in New York and thought my chances were great but nothing came of it." Back in Detroit, he temporarily abandoned plans to make cartooning his career when he joined the copy desk of the Detroit Free Press.

Not surprisingly, Wright's total attention was not riveted to copyediting. It was not long before his talent with pen and ink surfaced again and he began sketching one-panel cartoons depicting the petty politicians and incompetent bureaucrats indigenous to every municipal government.

Though the thrust of his satirical cartoons usually reflected some absurd incident in the Detroit area, the topical nature held an appeal even for those not familiar with regional politicos.

After 11 years at the Free Press, Wright was still devoting most of his week to his responsibilities on the copy desk until the Detroit News lured him away with an offer to concentrate exclusively on a daily cartoon strip.

As a nationally syndicated strip, "Wright Angles" is less Detroit-oriented than before but its wit and poignancy has grown twofold. But that's not all that's doubled. Tackling everything from busing to precocious tots, Wright has built a dedicated following of readers from coast-to-coast.

"A few weeks ago," he says, "a woman from Southern California wrote to say how much she enjoyed the strip I did on their schoolteachers' strike. She thought I had to be a local resident because the cartoon seemed to be a perfect comment about the strike there. She was shocked when I told her I did the strip from Detroit."

Naturally, Wright is pleased over the personalized touch his strip seems to convey but he is not too surprised.

"I'm not saying all cities are the same but most of them have the same problems . . . busing is on everyone's mind around the country, and so are teachers' strikes and insensitive municipal governments.

"All I do," he continues, "is look at local political developments and I've got material for a strip. In fact, it's not hard to find material just about anywhere. I can scan the TV page and find something. My son is a newsboy and when I hear some of his experiences while delivering papers, I can be sure there's going to be something worth putting into a strip."

With his son on the first rung in newspapers, does it mean another generation of the Wright family will carry the family torch in journalism?

"I doubt it," Wright says drolly. "He's 13 and he says his only ambition is to be a beach bum. My daughter, who's 14, wants to be a psychiatrist so she can straighten out the rest of her family."

Wright finds most of his therapy in various weekend pursuits. A devotee of train memorabilia, Wright is a member of the Model Railroaders Assn.and has designed several logos for that hobby group's periodicals. He also participates in a Sunday softball league and frequently spends weekend mornings on the links with his son but confesses, "I'm not really a golf nut. I only play with my son who hopes to belong to his school golf team and is always looking for someone to practice with."

The wry understated sense of humor takes an uncharacteristic bent toward the serious when Wright discusses his craft and its practitioners.

"I had been warned by many a newspaper illustrator to stay away from newspaper art departments. They told me it could be a dead-end job with most of your time spent touching up photos or making up ads. But drawing a daily strip now occupies me fulltime."

He explains that "as long as the daily strips have no continuous plot, I can spend a day or two developing enough ideas for a week's worth of strips then I draw almost all of them in one day."

Wright feels the trend among cartoonists is away from serial or continuous strips, "which is a shame but strips with a single idea or gag seem more popular with the public."

He disagrees that the quality of cartoon drawing has suffered in deference to the more sophisticated "message" cartoonists whose draftsmanship isn't as developed as veteran cartoonists.

"In fact, I think most of the more contemporary strips have improved their drawing styles. Because many of them don't go in for a lot of unnecessary detail doesn't mean they're not as well-drawn," he states. He does feel however, that finding new material for strips is considerably easier than in the past.

"It's more wide open now," he says. "Politics used to be such a touchy subject but now cartoonists can wade right into it. Even ethnic jokes aren't sacred anymore."

There is one social topic Wright thinks will probably always remain taboo. "Religion," he says, "will never be fair game but there are certainly enough other subjects to tap for ideas."

EDITORS!
WRITE FOR MY LATEST ART SAMPLES!
I'VE SERVED AS A HUMOROUS ILLUSTRATOR FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS, LARGE NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, AND GREETING CARDS! HIGH QUALITY, MODERN ILLUSTRATION
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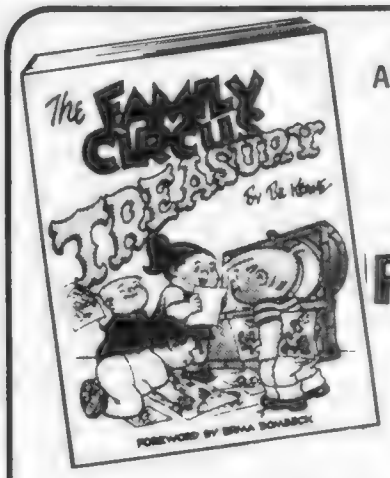

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nostalgia

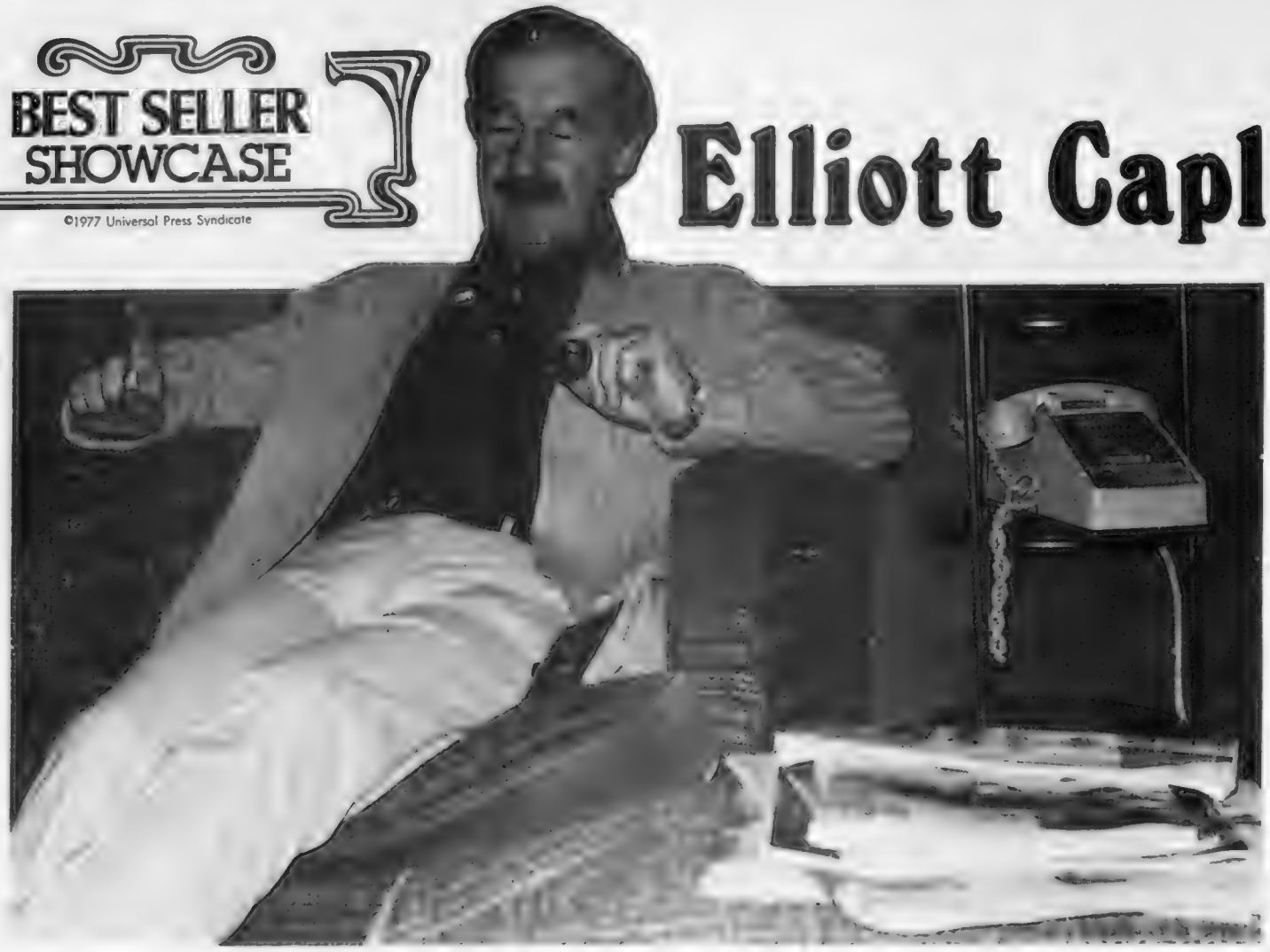
Another of the nostalgic photos lent us by Merrill Blosser. The cartoonists shown appeared at The Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children, in San Francisco, on November 12, 1949.

(Front row, left to right) Bill Zarba, Rube Goldberg, Alfred Andriola, Gus Edson, Russell Patterson, Tony DiPreta.
(Second row, left to right) Russ Westover, Paul Terry, Raeburn Van Buren, Jimmy Hatlo, Roy Justus, Elmer Messner, Al Vermeer.
(Back two rows, left to right) Charles Biro, Elmer Woggon, Howard Sparber, Merrill Blosser, Chic Young, Allen Saunders, Hank Ketcham, Jo Fischer, Scott Long.

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE

©1977 Universal Press Syndicate

Elliott Caplin



All of us who have been involved in newspaper comics for a long while are aware of the expertise of ELLIOTT CAPLIN, who has been writing the continuities for a number of major newspaper strips for many years, and who has originated the ideas for various features in which he has then placed artists and writers to carry them on. However, the general public is not as aware of him, as it is of his brother, Al Capp. Elliott prefers to work anonymously—otherwise we would have long since talked with him for publication about his writing of specific strips. We're happy that in the following conversation he talks about the creation of his newest idea—'Best Seller Showcase' which is being distributed by the Universal Press Syndicate.

Hurd: Elliott, I know that in addition to the several popular comic strips which you have continued to write over the years, you occasionally originate a new idea for a feature, arrange with a writer and a cartoonist to produce it according to your specifications, and then sell the product to a newspaper syndicate. Would you say something about how your newest project, 'Best Seller Showcase,' which is being distributed by the Universal Press Syndicate, came into being.

Caplin: For one thing, I've noticed over the past year how successful several mini-series TV shows such as 'Roots' and 'Rich Man, Poor Man' have been. People are always fascinated by a serial and soap operas have done well ever since the beginning of TV. And many years ago 'Book-of-the-Month' was done as a newspaper feature. However, in that case they just ran the text from the book . . . But my thought was to take the medium in which I'm interested—comics—and see how comics would handle a best seller. When I decided to go after 'Raise the Titanic!' as the first book in the 'Best Seller Showcase' feature, I seriously wondered what I was going to offer the author for a book which was being sold for a million-and-a-half to paperbacks. I offered a modest sum for the rights to the book but, in addition, mentioned that I knew the newspaper feature would help sell paperbacks for the author and the publisher. In other words, this was really a

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **RAISE THE TITANIC!** by Clive Cussler

APRIL 14, 1912-THE 'TITANIC', WORLD'S MIGHTIEST LUXURY LINER ON HER MAIDEN ATLANTIC CROSSING....
WHY DID WE STOP, STEWARD?
WE'VE STRUCK SOMETHING-BUT IT'S NOT SERIOUS, SIR.
1517 PASSENGERS AND CREW PERISHED AS THE 'UNSINKABLE' SEAGOING PALACE PLUNGED TO HER ICY GRAVE...
IN THE MIDST OF THE TERRIBLE UNREALITY OF THIS AWFUL SCENE, PASSENGER JOSHUA BREWSTER WAYLAYS A SHIP'S OFFICER...
YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW ME THE WAY TO THE CARGO HOLD-IF YOU WISH TO LIVE TO SEE YOUR GRANDCHILDREN!
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
8/15

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **RAISE THE TITANIC!** by Clive Cussler

THE 'UNSINKABLE' TITANIC IS IN ITS DEATH THROES AS THE HALF MAD JOSHUA BREWSTER FORCES A SHIP'S OFFICER TO LEAD HIM TO THE SHIP'S VAULT...
THERE'S THE VAULT. BUT YOU'LL NEVER GET IT OPEN.
I HAVE A KEY, THANK YOU.
VAULT
G DECK
8/16
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
THERE'S STILL TIME FOR YOU. I KILLED 8 GOOD MEN FOR WHAT'S IN THIS VAULT. I WILL ACCOMPANY IT TO THE BOTTOM.
G DECK
FRANK BOLLE

little extra bonus that I was offering them. Later on, when the syndicate began to sell the feature very successfully, I knew that I had much more money to work with, with the result that we were able to more than quadruple the amount paid to the author. Since the money was coming in, I didn't hold onto it, but spent a fortune to get the right books, and continued to pay my artists and writers very well, as I've always done. Speaking of this last point, I pay guys what they're worth—I guess that's why I've lasted as long as I have—over 40 years—in this business. I've never cut corners on that—if you get someone who's going to knock himself out for you, you pay him! Incidentally, we pay three times what a major publication that digests books does to get the rights. And we're giving the reader a best-seller along with his newspaper, whereas he'd have to pay $9 for it in the bookstores. By the way, we try to do a best-seller in the feature while the book is still in hardcover form.

Hurd: There are a lot of problems in doing a book in strip form, aren't there?

Caplin: They're tremendous! First of all there are the prohibited areas—most best-sellers contain scenes which are instantly objectionable to editors—scenes of assignation—the obligatory sex scene, etc. Currently, a book like "The Thorn Birds" is about an archbishop in the Catholic Church who fathers a child. You can't do that in comics. There were love chapters in 'Raise the Titanic!' and Ludlum's 'Chancellor Manuscript'—a violent book but interesting as hell—contains 5 subplots. How can you do something like that in 8 weeks? Yet I think we're solving the problem slowly.

Hurd: Since the strip has become very successful, you're having an easier time getting books to adapt, aren't you?

Caplin: Yes—nowadays books are coming through the transom—I've been offered half-a-dozen best sellers recently. This is a relief from the situation this past summer when I was on the phone constantly, to Ludlum in England, to California, etc., trying to acquire rights.

Hurd: Could we go into the mechanics of what happens when you get a strip idea which you think may be salable to a syndicate?

Caplin: First of all, I consider which syndicate is likely to be the most receptive to a particular idea I may have. I know the way most of the syndicates operate, I know most of their people, and I'm aware of what features they already have. For example, I wouldn't go up to King Features with another 'Blondie'-type strip or another 'Hagar'. Certain syndicates are looking for certain kinds of things, and I've a pretty good idea what the reception would be for an idea at different syndicates. Some are more traditional—some are more enthusiastic about the newest approaches, etc.

Hurd: Your cartoonist friends are aware that you conceived the idea for the "Broom-Hilda' strip, the very popular feature by Russell Myers which is distributed by the Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Syndicate. What's next, after you come up with a new idea?

Caplin: As the years have progressed, I've gotten to know very many artists and writers in our business, and my respect for them has grown tremendously. As a result, I've mentally stored up the names of artists and writers who might be just right to execute a particular idea. With a writer and artist in mind, I get together with them and go into great detail about my idea. If the ones I've picked seem right for the project we go ahead. If an artist and writer do all the work on the strip after it gets into syndication, they earn the major part of the income. I get an acceptable percent of the income from then on, but this is very modest, and there's never been any problem with anyone in this connection. Naturally, if I write a feature, then I would share to a much greater extent. But if I create an idea such as 'Broom-Hilda', and then the brilliance of Russell Myers takes over, and I have virtually nothing to do with it after that, the artist makes what he should on the feature. On occasion I've said to an artist, "The first X-number of dollars go to you and I won't take a dime." In some instances I've worked 3 or 4 years for nothing. I'm never greedy and I respect what the other guy does.

Hurd: I understand there's a whole stable of artists and writers working on the 'Best Seller Showcase' feature.

Caplin: Yes, because I'm working on three books at one time. And the monetary ar-

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **RAISE THE TITANIC!** by Clive Cussler

75 YEARS AFTER THE 'TITANIC' PLUNGED 2½ MILES TO AN ICY GRAVE, A STRANGE CONNECTION IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE SUNKEN LINER AND THE SAFETY OF THE U.S.....
BYZANIUM- THE CRITICAL ELEMENT IN BUILDING AN INPENETRABLE DEFENSE SYSTEM- EXISTS ONLY ON THIS TINY RUSSIAN OWNED ISLAND...
THE PRESIDENT IS BRIEFED BY SECRET AGENT, DIRK PITT.
AND WHAT HAVE YOU DONE ABOUT IT, DIRK?
ONE OF OUR AGENTS MANAGED TO GET ON THE ISLAND, MR. PRESIDENT.
FRANK BOLLE
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
AND DID WE GET HIM OUT?
YES SIR-BUT ONE OF THEIR PATROL WAS KILLED IN THE ESCAPE. I...AH...HAD TO DO IT TO GET OUR MAN AND HIS INFORMATION BACK SAFELY!
9/17

STORM WARNING

A Novel by Jack Higgins

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **STORM WARNING** by Jack Higgins

THE STORM-BATTERED BARKENTINE, 'DEUTSCHLAND' IS CARRYING GERMAN SAILORS AND NUNS FLEEING FROM BRAZIL TO GERMANY DURING THE CLOSING DAYS OF WORLD WAR II...
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
SISTER LOTTE LEAVES THE CABIN FOR A BREATH OF CLEAN SALT AIR, WATCHED BY SEAMAN WALZ...
AS THE GIRL PASSES THE GALLEY ENTRANCE, WALZ REACHES OUT AND CATCHES HER AROUND THE WAIST...
10-24

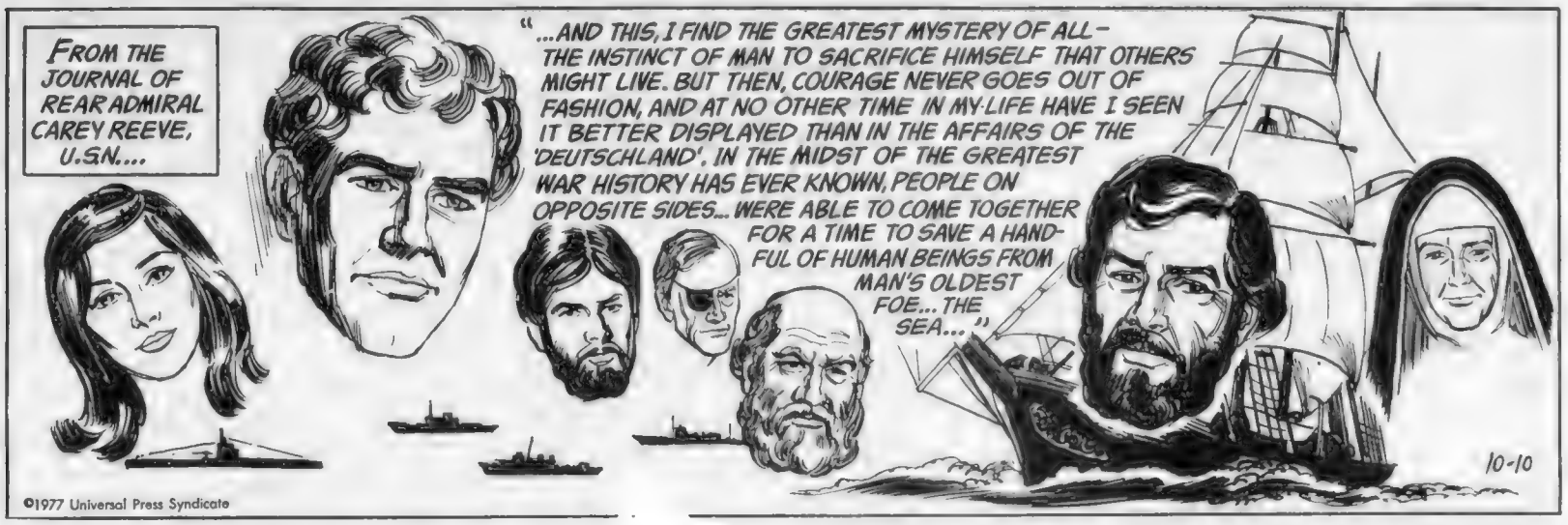
BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **STORM WARNING** by Jack Higgins

BOSON RICHTER IS AWAKENED BY A SCREAM FROM SISTER LOTTE...
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
LIGHTNING FLICKERS OVERHEAD AS THE STORM MOVES IN...
WALZ!
10-25
TERRIFIED, WALZ SPRINGS INTO THE RATLINES, RICHTER AFTER HIM AS THOUGH HE HAD ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD...

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **STORM WARNING** by Jack Higgins

PURSUED BY RICHTER, WALZ DRAWS HIS KNIFE AND SLASHES THE RATLINES...
AS THE RATLINES PART, RICHTER REACHES FOR THE DOWNHAUL, SWINGING FROM IT TO SHROUD WITH THE SKILL OF A TRAPEZE ARTIST...
RICHTER IS CLOSE NOW. THE SHIP HEELS AS WALZ CRIES OUT AND GOES BACK OVER THE YARD INTO SPACE...
AAAAAA!
...BECOMING ONE WITH THE NIGHT, TAKEN BY THE SEA.
10 26
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **STORM WARNING** by Jack Higgins


FROM THE JOURNAL OF REAR ADMIRAL CAREY REEVE, U.S.N....
"...AND THIS, I FIND THE GREATEST MYSTERY OF ALL – THE INSTINCT OF MAN TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF THAT OTHERS MIGHT LIVE. BUT THEN, COURAGE NEVER GOES OUT OF FASHION, AND AT NO OTHER TIME IN MY LIFE HAVE I SEEN IT BETTER DISPLAYED THAN IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE 'DEUTSCHLAND'. IN THE MIDST OF THE GREATEST WAR HISTORY HAS EVER KNOWN, PEOPLE ON OPPOSITE SIDES... WERE ABLE TO COME TOGETHER FOR A TIME TO SAVE A HANDFUL OF HUMAN BEINGS FROM MAN'S OLDEST FOE... THE SEA..."
10-10
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate

rangements on this feature have to be somewhat different from what they are when just one artist takes over a feature such as Russell Myers with 'Broom Hilda.' When an artist is assigned to draw his first 8-week best seller, he gets a fixed amount for the job, and the same is true for the writer. Maybe he only does one book the first year. Then let's say he's re-employed to do a second book. If the feature is doing well, and it has been, then the artist gets a raise for that second assignment. In other words, when the strip makes more money, the artist and the writer make more dough—that's the way it should be.

Hurd: Cartoonists are certainly delighted that 'Best Seller Showcase', and several other features such as 'Star Hawks', which we covered in Issue -35 of CARTOONIST PROfiles, indicate a revival of interest on the part of syndicates in the story strip! As you know, for a long time now we've been hearing the idea that the public won't hold still for continuities in newspaper strips because it can see a complete story in an hour on TV.

Caplin: In polls, the funny strips always come out ahead because the readership of continuities is selective—just like the readership of the Encyclopedia Britannica is. If the poll shows that a funny strip gets 60% of the readership, and a continuity gets 30%, it means that those 30% devoted readers must have that strip every day. It isn't as widespread an audience because it requires more thought to read a story strip and to remember what's happened. But it's an essential part of the newspaper! It's nonsense that because readers can see a complete story in an hour on TV, they won't follow a newspaper strip continuity for 8 or 10 weeks. Why does TV revert back to the serial? Why do soaps always do well? Those of us in the business were sure that there was always a compact, influential group—the Cadillac drivers of comic strips—who read good continuities.

Another thing—certain restrictive old standards and shibboleths that say you can't do this or that in strips are breaking down for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most important is that there's a new feeling in the syndicates—and there are a lot of younger men. I'm speaking from the elevation of my own age, so I'm not saying old guys are crazy. I'm simply saying that the young ones are coming in with new and innovative ideas, and that the administration of the syndicates is gradually getting into younger hands. John McMeel and Jim Andrews of the Universal Press Syndicate, Don Michel of the Chicago Tribune—NY News Syndicate, Allan Priaulx of King Features Syndicate, Dennis Allen of The Register & Tribune Syndicate, are all young men and they're having a good effect on the business.

Hurd: Elliott, you've written half-a-dozen plays which have been produced in various theaters, have written some of the major newspaper comic strips for many years, and have been involved in a number of different kinds of efforts in creative fields for a long time. You've been a great story teller, as has your brother, Al Capp. In concluding this talk, could you say something about how the two of you acquired this story-telling ability?

Caplin: During the years we were growing up there was no radio, no TV. Maybe we'd go to the movies once a week, but what dominated our lives, of course, was books. Al was the eldest, and since he wasn't able to participate in athletics, the house was full of books which he read omnivorously. And as soon as I was old enough, I began to read also. Al had read all of George Bernard Shaw when he was 13 years old—he read through Shakespeare, and was a tremendously voracious reader of everything. And I should say a word about our father who was always a storyteller and a guy with literary ambitions. He graduated from Yale in 1908, went to law school, never practiced it but became a salesman for industrial oil. But here's the astonishing thing—at 73 or 74, he went back to school, to the University of Chicago to get his master's degree in writing. Then he wrote a book, a thinly-veiled autobiography about what it was like growing up in New Haven at the turn of the century, and sold it to Prentice-Hall! However, he died before he had a chance to polish it up for publication. But at 75, he'd become an author. ●

BEST SELLER SHOWCASE *featuring* **STORM WARNING** by Jack Higgins

AUG. 26, 1944 THE THREE MASTED BARKENTINE 'DEUTSCHLAND' BUILT IN 1881, RIDES AT ANCHOR IN THE HARBOR OF BELEM, BRAZIL.
©1977 Universal Press Syndicate
GERMANY'S GOING UNDER, SISTER ANGELA. I WANT TO BE WITH MY CHILDREN WHEN THE WAR'S OVER.
AND FOR THAT YOU'LL DARE ANYTHING, CAPT. BERGER?
10-11
INCLUDING 5,000 MILES OF OCEAN DOMINATED BY BRITISH AND AMERICAN NAVIES IN A PATCHED UP SAILING SHIP-YES!
BECAUSE OF WHAT LIES AHEAD, HOME IS WHERE WE ARE NEEDED MOST.
LIKE YOU, THE OTHER SISTERS OF MERCY AND I HAVE OBTAINED SWEDISH PASSPORTS!

Phil Love

For a number of years our beloved columnist, the late PHIL LOVE, wrote a column about comics for The Washington Star, of which he was the Feature Editor. And for the past few years, letters from many of our readers have indicated how much they have enjoyed his piece in each issue of our magazine. Because of this reader interest we are very pleased to say that his widow, Ann Love, has given us permission to publish some of those Washington Star columns of Phil's. Recently we agreed that whenever any updating is necessary, your editor will add that, after consulting with the subject of the column. With this in mind, we talked with Jack Berrill to discover the present status of the Berrill teenagers who are referred to in the following column which appeared on August 31, 1964.

By Philip H. Love

Jack Berrill is one cartoonist who never has to rack his brains for ideas. He has a houseful of them.

Three of Jack's six children are teen-agers—just the right ages not only to feed him ideas for his daily "Gil Thorp" strip but, as he puts it, to "keep me going on what's corny, what's in and what's out." And each of the others will, in due time, assume the same role.

Jack might never have become a cartoonist if a rheumatic heart hadn't kept him in bed for six months when he was a boy. Drawing helped to pass the time, and the long hours of practice, day after day, gradually made him very good at it.

When Jack was graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School, he was offered an art scholarship by Pratt Institute but decided instead to go to work for the New York News as a copy boy. "My father thought an art course might ruin my cartoon style," he explains.

That cartoon style soon enabled Jack to land a job as an assistant to Martin Branner, creator of the "Winnie Winkle" comic. He worked for Branner for 15 years and probably would have continued if he hadn't been stricken with poliomyelitis. The illness—from which he recovered fully—set him to thinking that, for the security of his family, he should try to develop a strip of his own.

The late Maurice T. Reilly, executive vice president of the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate, encouraged him to get up some samples.

By now, Jack was living in New Milford,-Conn., and one of his nearest neighbors was the athletic director of the local high school, Joe Wiser.

"I bird-dogged my neighbor for months," Jack recalls, "attending basketball, football and baseball games, and sitting in on bull sessions of high-school athletes to familiarize myself with their problems, their hopes and their aspirations. Maybe I'm a simple soul, but I think our young people should be portrayed as they honestly are. For the most part, the kids are looking for advice and guidance, and they're not getting it. I try to reflect high-school life as realistically as a cartoon strip for family consumption can."

"Gil Thorp" made its bow in September, 1958, and now appears in about 70 newspapers. In The Star's most recent comics poll, it was voted into fifth place on a list of 34 daily and Sunday strips and panels and into the No. 2 spot on the daily-only lineup of ten cartoon features.

* * * *

Jack was born and reared in Brooklyn. During his two years in the Air Force in World War II, he was asked so often where he was from that he began to take some pride in having shed his Brooklyn accent. Then he was drafted by the Catholic chaplain to serve mass.

"The priest had heard me speak without ever raising any question about my origin," Jack says. "But after hearing my Latin responses during the mass, he asked me what part of Brooklyn I was from. Can you imagine a guy speaking Latin with a Brooklyn accent?"

Jack writes his own script—and, as a result, works 11 to 14 hours a day. The strip is drawn at least six weeks in advance. What spare time Jack manages he spends attending high-school sports events, talking with teenagers, romping with his own kids or reading about the Civil War.

"Teenagers are too often portrayed as crazy, mixed-up kids—instead of the important people the overwhelming majority of them really are," Jack says. "They're important people with important decisions to make, people who deserve to be taken seriously, not deplored or ridiculed."

* * * *

Mrs. Berrill, who grew up in the same neighborhood as her husband, tries to keep the children out of his hair when he's working. But when his preliminary sketches are done, he likes to get the reactions of his "board of teen-age advisers" before applying the ink.

At present, the "board" consists of David, 16; Anne, 15; and Tom, 14. Before Dave passes out of his teens, the group will be joined by Chris, now 10. And then Kevin, 7, will be coming along—and, for the long haul, there's Stephen, 1.

"As you can see," Jack points out, "It will be a long, long time before I run out of teen-agers. And in my field, teen-agers are ideas."

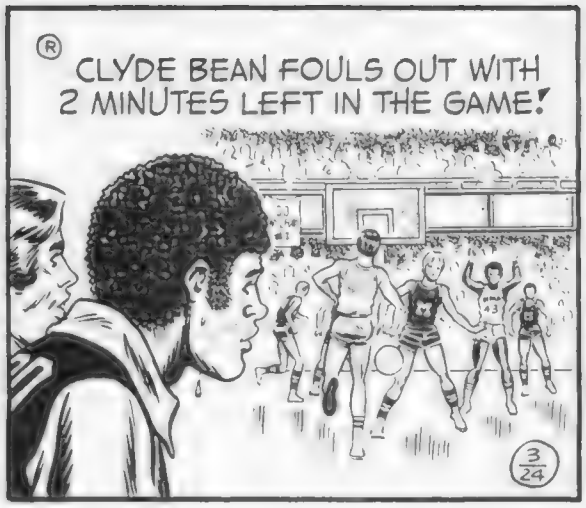
Jack Berrill

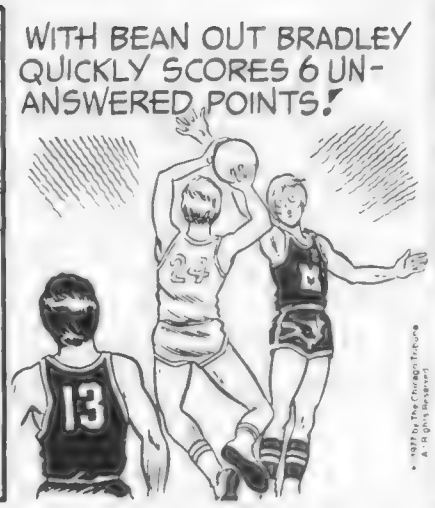
Following is an updating which Jack gave us this past December: Son, David Berrill is now a guidance director in Connecticut. Anne is an editor for the Vera Institute of Justice which constantly reviews matters judicial and anything having to do with the courts. Tom drives a produce truck these days. Chris, sad to say, died in an auto accident in 1974. Kevin is in his senior year at Vassar College. Stephen is now a 9th-grader. Veronica (Bonnie), who wasn't even born at the time this column of Phil's was written, is now a 6th-grader. We asked Jack how he's making out these days without his former teenage "board of advisers" to guide him. He told us that he has many friends who are teachers, and that he plays poker regularly with many of the athletic coaches who are a great help to him. And about 4 years ago Jack's wife went back to college, got her degree, and is now teaching English in the local high school. He says she's a great source of ideas because she has her finger on everything scholastically. The Berrills now live in Brookfield, Connecticut.

GIL THORP

HALF-TIME... AND MILFORD TRAILS BRADLEY BY 12 IN THE SEMI-FINALS
BERRILL
© 1977 by The Chicago Tribune All Rights Reserved
WHAT IN BLAZES?
FENTON JUST ACCUSED ME OF PLANTIN' THAT POT IN HIS LOCKER!
OF ALL THE STUPID... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, ERNIE?
YEAH...BUT HOW'S THIS EYE GONNA LOOK WHEN I GO BACK OUT?...THIS GAME'S ON T.V.!
IT'S UNREAL! WE'RE DOWN BY 12 AND OUR GUYS HAVE A FIST FIGHT!
AND FENTON'S WORRIED ABOUT HOW HIS EYE WILL LOOK ON T.V.!
3/22
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
WHAT HAPPENED TO FENTON'S EYE? IT LOOKS SWOLLEN!
I DON'T KNOW! I
BUT SINCE THIS 2ND HALF BEGAN ...HE'S REALLY TAKEN CHARGE! MILFORD'S CUT BRADLEY'S LEAD TO 5!
THAT FIGHT BROKE THE TENSION !
TIPPET HITS! WE'RE TIED AT 71 WITH 3 MINUTES LEFT...LISTEN TO THIS CROWD!
3/23
2 MINUTES LEFT...
BEAN GOES UP... HE HITS...AND OH...HE'S CALLED FOR CHARGING! THAT'S HIS 5TH!
BEAN IS OUT OF THE GAME! HE'S GETTING A STANDING OVATION AS MILFORD LEADS BRADLEY 76-74!
BERRILL

'GIL THORP' is distributed by the Chicago Tribune–New York News Syndicate.


CLYDE BEAN FOULS OUT WITH 2 MINUTES LEFT IN THE GAME!
3/24


WITH BEAN OUT BRADLEY QUICKLY SCORES 6 UNANSWERED POINTS!
13
24

LESS THAN A MINUTE...KEAN GETS THE REBOUND...BRADLEY WILL STALL!
BRADLEY
22
BERRILL

BRADLEY'S RUNNING OUT THE CLOCK! 4...3...2...IT'S ALL OVER... BRADLEY 84...MILFORD 80!
M
13
3/25

MILFORD... THE CINDERELLA TEAM DIDN'T QUITE MAKE IT!
NO...BUT WAIT'LL NEXT YEAR! EXCEPT FOR RUSSO, THEY'LL ALL BE BACK!

I FEEL LIKE CRYIN', BEANIE!
GO AHEAD! I AM!
23
BERRILL

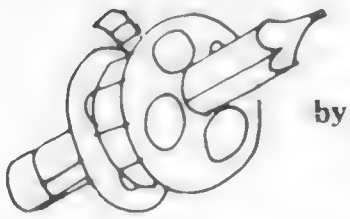
IF ONLY WE HADN'T HAD SUCH A LOUSY 1ST HALF!
IT'S OVER NOW ...WE WERE BEATEN BY A DARN GOOD TEAM...
3/26

YOU DID YOUR BEST...YOU ALL PLAYED HARD ...AND I'M VERY PROUD OF YOU!
THE BUS IS READY, COACH!

MEANWHILE...
I WAS SO SURE MILFORD WOULD GO ALL THE WAY!
THEY SHOULD HAVE...SOMETHING WENT WRONG AND I'M GONNA FIND OUT WHAT IT WAS!
EXIT
PRESS
BERRILL

NATIONAL CARTOONISTS SOCIETY

In our continuing collaboration with The National Cartoonists Society, we asked animator HOWARD BECKERMAN if we could present to our readers his "A Sly History of Animation Style."



by Howard Beckerman

A Sly History of Style in the Animated Film

It was my best friend, Marvin Fox, who showed me how to draw a World War I bi-plane. "You draw it like this," he said . . .

We were 6 years old and Marvin was full of handy information on how to draw sailors and Santa Clauses. He could make the most wondrous things out of the most commonplace items. He would have been a superb designer of early animated films if he had been 40 years older.

In the beginning of the animation business, when Felix the Cat and Koko the Clown were romping about in primitive black and white, the idea was to produce characters that could be drawn quickly hundreds of times. It was much like the Ford motor car which was styled to be made on an assembly line and could be bought in any color—so long as it was black.

The characters of that period were heavily derived from the popular comic strips of the day. Winsor McCay, a master of that medium, also turned his interest to the animation of drawings, but his mature approach was neglected for the quick and simple devices that were required to bring 5-minute films into the theaters at the rate of one new one a week.

Eyes looked like this . . .

Noses like this . . .

Feet like this . . .

The animation was often stiff and jerky, not at all as well conceived as the vigorous efforts of McCay. But somewhere along the line someone discovered the drawings would appear to move more smoothly if they were animated in a rubbery fashion. The result was that all the characters of the early 30's bobbed and contorted with limbs that lacked elbows and knees. Everyone from Mickey Mouse to Olive Oyl waved arms and danced on legs that appeared to be made of overcooked spaghetti. By then eyes looked like this . . .

Noses like this . . .

And feet appeared thus . . .

It all seemed to fit the funkiness of the Depression 30's. Garbo went braless, out-of-work men wore trousers that sagged at the knees and bagged at the bottoms, and Cagney raced about in cars with floppy canopies.

Then Disney discovered the power of characterization, and animators on both coasts hung around theaters waiting for the feature to end so they could zip in and see The Three Little Pigs for the umpteenth time. The Disney guys went on to create their grandiose version of Snow White, bringing the techniques of animation to even greater heights. Timing was becoming sophisticated; characters eased in and out of actions: they anticipated motions by going in opposite directions and overlapped their actions for greater fluidity.

By the 40's, animators were solidly entrenched in a style that reflected the best of the Disney Studio product. Color enhanced almost every cartoon made. The World of Tomorrow, as depicted at the New York World's Fair, became evident in the streamlining of everything from cars to cartoons. The casual look of the old black and white animations gave way to the luminous likes of Superman, Donald Duck, and Bugs Bunny.

Eyes began to look like this . . .

Noses like this . . .

Feet became . . .

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The Disney style found its way into every corner of the animation business. Industrial films, Army training films, and theater commercials all imitated the Disney product.

Suddenly in the early 50's a new, revolutionary style happened on the scene. This was created by a breakaway group of former Disney artists who called themselves United Productions of America. UPA appeared at the time the designs of Alexander Calder and Charles Eames were becoming part of the reconstruction of a world wrecked by the Second World War.

Soon the bright vision of this little studio showed up in cartoons influenced by such creators as Paul Klee, Raul Dufy, Ludvig Bemmelmans, Saul Steinberg, Georges Braque, and Henri Matisse. The way the characters moved matched these flat colors and linear shapes. It was not the heavy pull of gravity that seemed to animate them, as in the Disney manner, but the mood of the design and story. Props appeared and disappeared as needed. If there was no reason for movement, then nothing moved. This was the buttoned-down 50's.

Eyes looked like this . . .

Noses like this. . .

Shoes like this . . .

The characters had become as uptight as the population in the wake of the McCarthy investigations. Men wore button-down collars, narrow ties, and gray flannel suits. Women still showed the results of the "New Look" in skirts that ended above the ankle. And there was a sudden interest in the decorative details of things in cartoon drawings.

Cartoon characters wore garments with delicate patterns. Little boys sported striped polo shirts and girls displayed pinafores and pigtails. Telephones had curly cords and houses had gingerbread roofs. Eisenhower was the president; Johnnie Ray sang of a "Little White Cloud That Cried," and Arthur Godfrey expected humility from his employees. Hanna and Barbera entered TV and commercials implored women to remain in the kitchen.

Legs looked like this . . .

Breasts looked like this . . .

The 60's brought with them the miniskirt, the Beatles, and eventually George Dunning's THE YELLOW SUBMARINE. This psychedelic decade combined the rock style of the Beatles, the rise of the drug culture, and Peter Max. The electronic plugged-in-switched-on desire for change brought forth a cartoon style the influence of which can still be felt today.

Another aspect of this period was the increased use of designs by such "print" artists as William Steig, Ronald Searle, Robert O. Blechman, Rowland Wilson, and Jack Davis. If anything was proved, it was that anything could be animated.

Eyes looked like this . . .

Noses like this . . .

Feet like this . . .

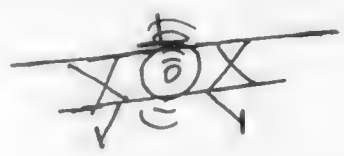
The 60's collapsed into the 70's with the shock of My Lai, Watergate, and Ralph Bakshi's HEAVY TRAFFIC. The animation style had become eclectic. The average person can catch the International Animation Festival on public television, where the airbrush balloonines of the 40's melds with the rubber-stamped figures of Saturday morning kidvid, and the Hubley-influenced lines and textures slide into the doll cartoons of the Czechs and the Hungarians.

Today student interest in the medium has created not only an audience clamoring for late night Betty Boop, but has given birth to a creative force that shows up in the hundreds of serious attempts at animation production.

The medium seems to reinvent itself every 10 years or so. Each decade results in a new vision and each style falls into disrepute for a while, only to be rediscovered and brought into prominence once more. At present Winsor McCay has been reestablished as an influence on everything from animated films to the illustrated books of Maurice Sendak.

The events of each decade have an obvious effect on the styles of the popular art of the times. As we gaze today from our polluted planet through the smog-filled atmosphere at the men we've placed on the moon and the machines on Mars, we are somehow affecting the styles of our forthcoming animated cartoons.

But just for the record, before any cataclysmic tremors occur, before the arrival of visitors from outer space disturbs our complacency, allow me to show you how to draw a World War I biplane. "You see, you draw it like this . . . "



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